THE ULTIMATE MUSIC GUIDE

JOY DIVISION /// NEW ORDER

EXCLUSIVE
Introduction by
STEPHEN MORRIS

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CLOSER
ARCHIVE INTERVIEWS REDISCOVERED

SPECIAL 40TH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

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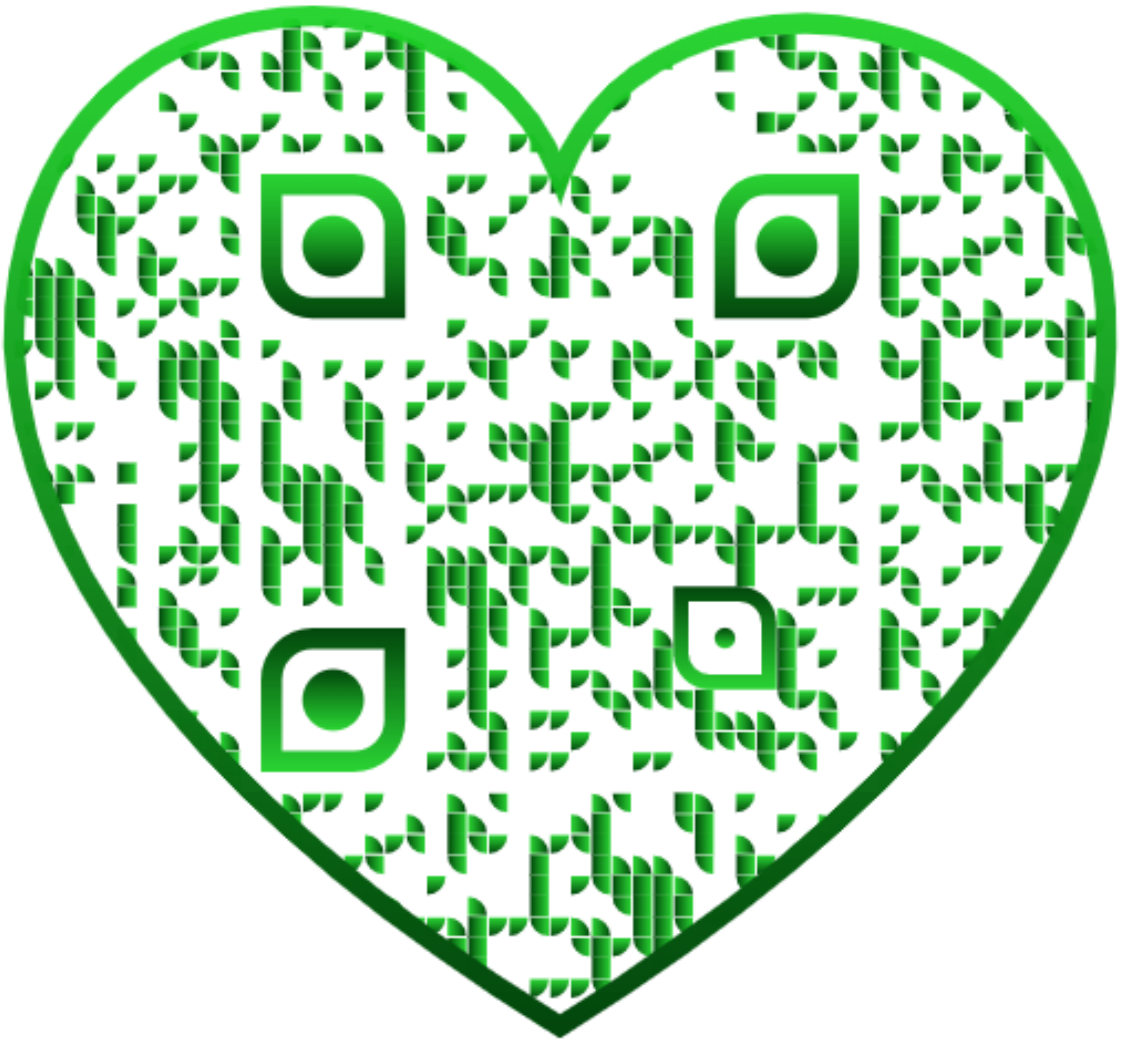

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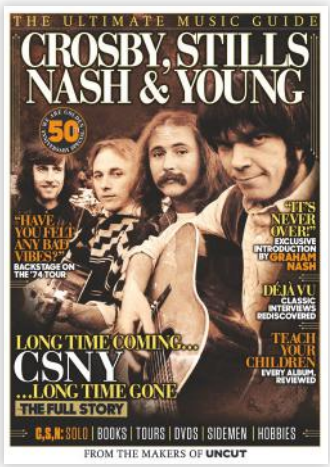

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"WE WANTED TO TAKE IT ON SOMEWHERE"

STEPHEN MORRIS INTRODUCES THE *ULTIMATE MUSIC GUIDE*

CAN you measure pride on a scale? I'm very proud of *Unknown Pleasures*: it's all of your life up to that point, and it's remained current-sounding for 40 years.

I don't think we can take full credit for that; Martin Hannett had a lot to do with the overall sound of it – he took a band who didn't know quite what they were doing, who knew they had something to get out, and helped them get it out. He took these raw songs and he put them in another world. We didn't appreciate it at the time, we just grumbled, "It doesn't sound like it does live."

"It was all about space": Joy Division at Bowden Vale Youth Club, March 14, 1979

Joy Division were very, very driven. We wrote all the songs together in the same room. The great thing was that Ian would turn up with a ready supply of lyrics he had already written. We'd just start playing and he'd find something to sing. He'd edit it as he went along and come back a week later with it done. We kept adding members. Like, Rob [*Gretton, Joy Division/New Order manager*]'s the fifth member! Martin's the sixth member! Joy Division was a total democracy – everybody contributed.

The thing about punk was it only lasted a few weeks. It was moving away from the 1-2-3-4 business into something, not more melodic but more introspective. Punk was "I'm going to stick it to you, mate", but by the time we got going it was more considered: Wire, the Banshees, Gang Of Four. We were allowed to develop by ourselves. I think we thought we were isolated from the rest of the Manchester music scene, which we weren't really, but we felt we had time to become Joy Division and learn to write these songs.

In Warsaw it was all about the riff, but as Joy Division it was all about space: Hooky had a big area, Bernard had his area and I try to go in the gap between the two. There wasn't much bleed between us. When we were on stage you were in your own world – you knew what the other person was going to be playing. There were a lot of improvised jams, because in those days gear broke down a lot – me and Hooky would have to come up with something.

To be honest, we didn't understand all the attention. Most of the time you'd wonder what journalists were on about: "They keep saying we're doomy and depressing." "I'm not depressing, are you?" Joy Division didn't have a massive following or anything, I think the biggest show we played was the Leeds Futurama Festival, which I think we all found very uncomfortable because we'd been playing in the back rooms of pubs and in tiny clubs and then you're on a huge stage where there was physical separation.

The recognition of the band seemed to come later, after Ian's death. At that time it was difficult: we just wanted to get on with doing music, doing something else. Not to denigrate Ian in any way, but we wanted to take it on somewhere. The question we were asking was: "What are we doing?"

We'd lost a great singer and a great lyricist. The first gig we did as New Order, it was obvious: we were like Joy Division but with a big gap where Ian was. But in spite of that we weren't even remotely thinking of getting someone to replace Ian. It was only when Rob came up with the idea of getting Gillian in to play guitar because Bernard couldn't play and sing at the same time. It was obvious that this sidestep was a way forward. We'd been getting more into keyboards on *Closer* and it became obvious that this was the big step forward.

For me, we knew New Order were getting somewhere when the Joy Division fans were disgusted with it. We'd get people turning up with Ian Curtis-like macs and standing disdainfully at the front while we were trying to do some four-to-the-floor synthesiser number, which to me was a strong indicator that surely you were heading into something new. It might be a bit contrary but that's how it felt to us. We were also into electronic music: Cabaret Voltaire and Kraftwerk, and we developed it from there. But when we went to New York that first time, it was formative: the beginning of hip-hop, disco wasn't the dirty word it had been. There was a whole thing evolving which seemed to embrace everything. In a club they'd play The Clash, the Bee Gees and some rap... That was interesting. They were playing big 12ins on the radio – it led to a direction for us really. We started working with drum machines and electronic rhythms.

You always want to do something better than the last time. As a fan, I remember being very upset when Bowie said he wasn't going to work with Mick Ronson any more. "Why? It's fantastic! There will never be a record as good as *Ziggy*..." As a fan you want more and more. People say: "Write another 'Blue Monday' – if I could, I would – but these things happen as a culmination of events and circumstances. I think the thing we all find daunting is starting with nothing. It's like you've got a mountain to climb and no-one can remember where they've put the ropes. But when New Order's good, it's fantastic. ●

MARTIN O'NEILL/REDFERNS

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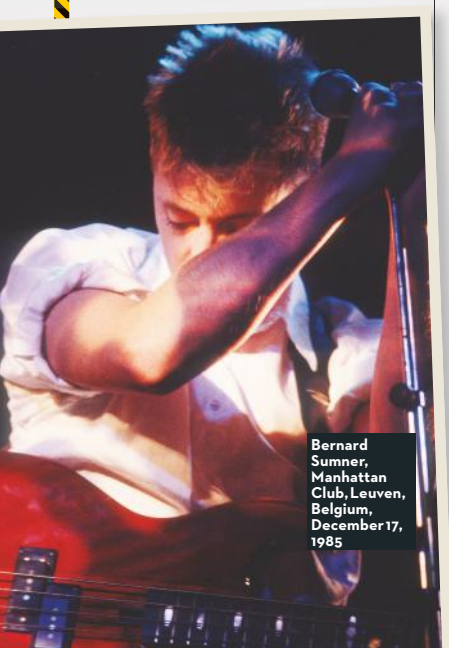
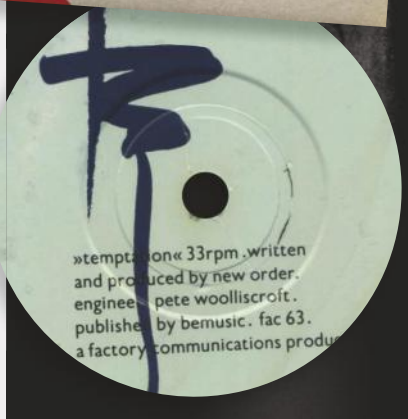
New Order in New York, October 1989: (l-r) Stephen Morris, Bernard Sumner, Gillian Gilbert and Peter Hook


Bernard Sumner, Manhattan Club, Leuven, Belgium, December 17, 1985



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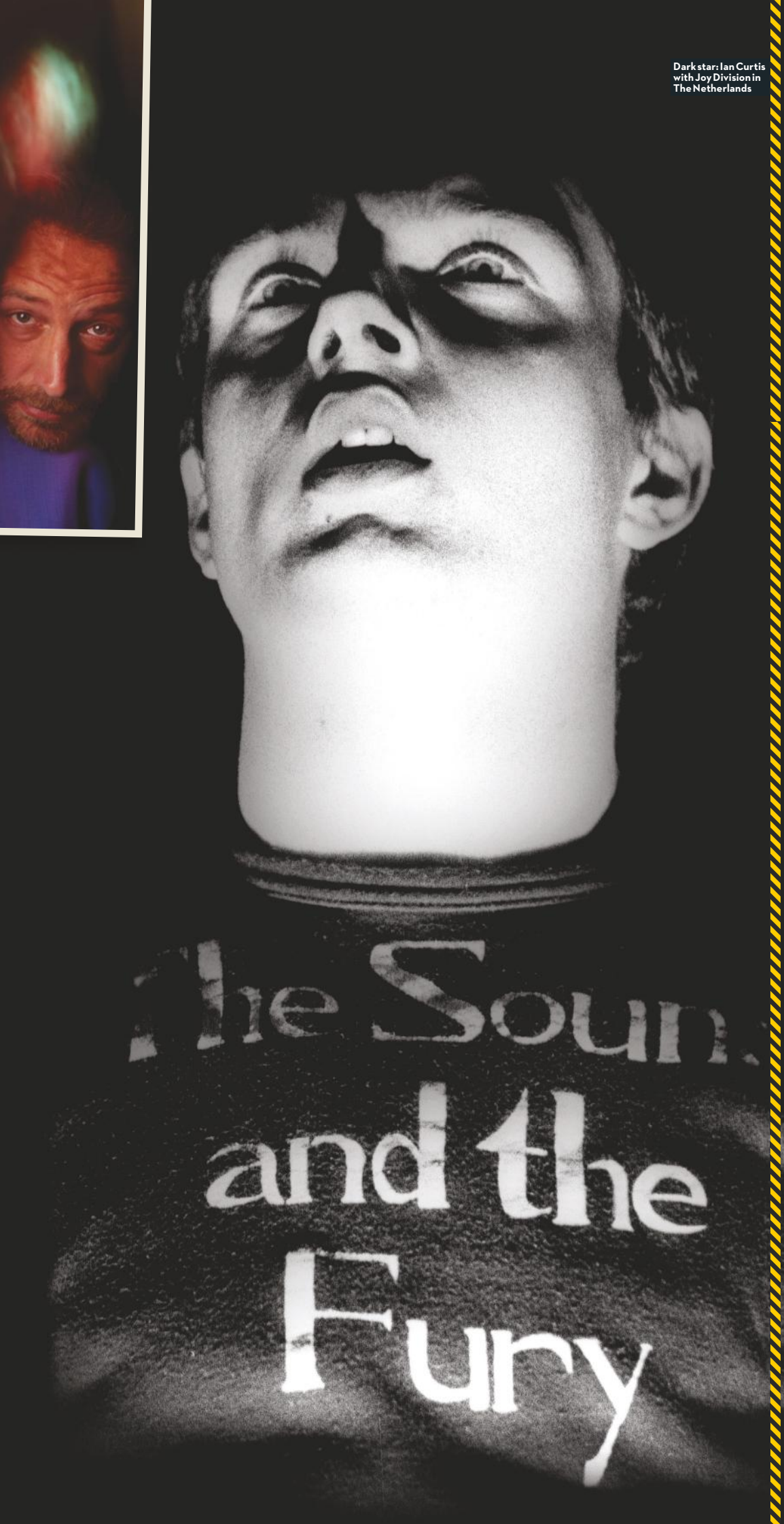

Dark star: Ian Curtis with Joy Division in The Netherlands

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COVERS PRINTED BY
WALSTEAD ROCHE
TEXT PRINTED BY
WALSTEAD BICESTER
COVER PHOTOGRAPHS BY
WENN.COM,
TOM BLAU/CAMERA PRESS

PRODUCTION & OPERATIONS

AD PRODUCTION & ACTING PRODUCTION MANAGER
BARRY SKINNER
PRINT WALSTEAD UK LIMITED
DISTRIBUTED BY MARKETFORCE (UK) LTD, 5 CHURCHILL PLACE, CANARY WHARF, LONDON E14 5HU

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JOY DIVISION

UNKNOWN PLEASURES

They've got the spirit! How Joy Division, routed via Warsaw, arrived at a classic debut album.

BY **JOHN ROBINSON**

WHEN he takes to the stage to speak at an awards ceremony in 2005, Peter Hook probably has it in mind more to be rude to Paul Weller than to articulate the singularity of Joy Division, but that anyway is what he helps to do. Accepting an award, he recalls how he had once been accosted by Weller when The Jam played in Manchester. "Are you the in the support band?" Weller had asked. "No," Hooky said. "I'm in Joy Division, mate."

Joy Division, he was saying, were nobody's support band. And really, their music was no less prickly, and no more clubbable than Peter Hook. After punk's anthemic imperatives (no wonder people were inspired to get involved), the post-punk they helped shape was a more speculative and interior space. Joy Division songs weren't calls to action, but hymns for their own discerning congregation.

Before we even get to the music, as an object *Unknown Pleasures*, with its wordless textured sleeve, monochrome pulsar cover image, rounded inner corners and eerie reddish vinyl, has already identified itself only as an object apart from its times, uninterested in marketing itself. On its inner sleeve there was a photograph of an open door – the journey through it would be a significant act of faith.

In September 1978, a time when some concertgoers were still spitting at musicians, Joy Division made a television appearance on *Granada Reports*, a regional show hosted by their patron Tony Wilson. Rather than the attention-seeking bombsite apparel of punk, the band was dressed for work: polished shoes, smart shirts, slacks. Instead of a gang, they were presented as vaguely associated units, isolated on their respective podia.

As the band perform "Shadowplay", the music is no less disconnected: a prowling bassline introduces a note of menace, while the guitarist plays lead lines completely drained of guitar heroism. The insistence of the drummer and the superimposed negative images of cars passing through a city give the impression of a sinister motorik, but that's without even considering the singer or the lyrics. We find assassins grouped at a nightmarish spectacle, death as mass entertainment. The song gathers momentum around the singer, who helps bring these separate elements together. It is, as Wilson advised at the outset, one of "the most interesting new sounds in the north-west".

Until very recently, the band had been participating in interesting but slightly less futuristic sounds in the region. Originally a group called Warsaw, Ian Curtis (vocals), Bernard Albrecht (né Sumner, guitar), Stephen Morris (drums) and Peter Hook (bass) had spent the winter of 1977 taking the initiative of punk and riding its momentum. Their song "Any Given Day" (introduced by the ill-considered shout "You all forgot Rudolph Hess!") from their October show at a Manchester punk venue had been recorded for Virgin's mini-album *Short Circuit: Live At The Electric Circus*.

Then, in mid-December, at Pennine Sound Studios in Oldham, the band recorded songs for their own debut EP. Far from juvenilia, these songs reveal an already-serious band. Opener "Warsaw" begins with a mysterious shouted number (Rudolph Hess's prisoner number, it is alleged), while "No Love Lost", with its unorthodox drum sounds and prominent bass, feels like unfamiliar, unsettling territory. But a song like this, with its cool guitar break, still bears signs of an inherited musical language. Likewise "Leaders Of Men" on the B-side, which nods to the

CRITICS' VERDICTS

"What gives Joy Division their edge is the consistency of their vision, the taut danceability of their faster songs, and the dreamlike spell of their slower explorations." JON SAVAGE, MELODY MAKER, JULY 21, 1979

"Joy Division music worries and nags like the early excursions of the German experimentalists. Investigate these confined spaces, these insides of cages, this outside of insanity." MAX BELL, NME, JULY 14, 1979

TRACK MARKS

1. Disorder ★★★★★
2. Day Of The Lords ★★★★
3. Candidate ★★★
4. Insight ★★★★★
5. New Dawn Fades ★★★
6. She's Lost Control ★★★★
7. Shadowplay ★★★★★
8. Wilderness ★★★
9. Interzone ★★★★★
10. I Remember Nothing ★★★

Label: Factory
Produced by: Martin Hannett
Recorded at: Strawberry Studios, Rochdale
Personnel: Ian Curtis (vocals), Bernard Sumner (guitar), Peter Hook (bass), Stephen Morris (drums)
Highest chart position: UK 5; US –

lyrical momentum of Bowie's "Queen Bitch"; both do something that Joy Division would not do in quite the same way subsequently. They're traditionally dynamic, as punk was. In short, they rock.

In early May 1978, Warsaw attempted to record their debut album for RCA records, taping tracks whose basic sound generally pushed the band back to the punk swamp. From RCA's suggestion that the band attempt NF Porter's "Keep On Keeping On", however, Warsaw arrived at "Interzone", a piece of urban alienation where JG Ballard met Iggy Pop. Within weeks, Warsaw had ditched much of their older material, and changed their name to Joy Division.

For the recording of *Unknown Pleasures* the following spring, Martin Hannett met Joy Division like medium finally meeting message, the estrangement expressed by "Disorder" enacted by the separation of the instruments in the album mix. There were occasional concessionary measures like the keyboard wash on the closing "I Remember Nothing", but the sound was all-new, and the mood of the album set to disconcert. Glasses smash. Lift gates slam. Synthesised meteor showers strike our bows. Such is the integrity of the whole picture, songs like "Transmission" (or "Digital" or "Glass" from the "Factory Sample" EP) don't gain entry, lest they unbalance the album.

The band initially rebelled at the sound of their debut, feeling it to be lacking the power of their live gigs, but for what it loses in immediacy the album gains in conceptual unity: it works by actively accentuating the lack of 'live' human give and take. Sounds here don't bleed into each other in spirited interplay, but remain distant from each other, positioned like characters on a starkly lit stage. Played by any other band in another environment, "Day Of The Lords" would sound like a Doors cover, and "New Dawn Fades" like Black Sabbath.

Played by Joy Division, this is music without reference points, a vision of humans facing unlikeable odds: frightening whether considered as a warning from history or a science-fiction vision of the near-future. The record is intelligently sequenced between fast-paced ("Disorder", "She's Lost Control", "Interzone") and the skeletal and atmospheric ("Candidate", "New Dawn Fades"), with an eye to those like "Shadowplay", which build in intensity in a way that suggests they had proved themselves live. Ian Curtis doesn't only command the attention in the black-and-white photos of the period. On *Unknown Pleasures*, he is singer, songwriter, and the person mediating between these musical positions.

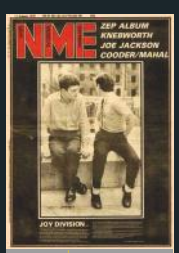
As rightly famous as the record is for the songs that have made their way onto a Spotify 'indie' list, *Unknown Pleasures* keeps on giving for its more formless musical shapes, and its more remote corners. In songs like "Insight" ("*I remember... when we were young*") or "Wilderness" ("*I travelled far and wide through many different times*"), Ian Curtis is really our only human guide, finding a tune and a phrase that strives to elevate the pop song into a more heroic discourse altogether.

> THIS IS MUSIC WITHOUT REFERENCE POINTS, A VISION OF HUMANS FACING UNLIKEABLE ODDS

Perhaps that's what we still respond to in the seriousness of *Unknown Pleasures*. Not so much its intimations of mortality, but its vibrant signs of life, its strangeness and sense of adventure. Rather than a fear of the open door, Joy Division encourage us through it, to travel with people who have already glimpsed some of what might lie beyond.

"WE'RE FREE TO DO WHAT WE WANT. THERE'S NO ONE RESTRICTING US"

A JOURNEY TO MANCHESTER TO MEET JOY DIVISION AND THEIR CIRCLE, AFTER THE RELEASE OF *UNKNOWN PLEASURES*. THE BAND'S OUTLOOK MIGHT BE BLEAK, BUT THEY KNOW HOW REDEMPTIVE MUSIC AS POWERFUL AS THEIRS CAN BE. "WE DON'T WANT TO GET DILUTED, REALLY," IAN CURTIS TELLS PAUL RAMBALI



NME 11/08/79

LET me draw back the curtains on a probably wet and no doubt freezing night last winter. A midweek night of no special significance, save that Joy Division had come marching into town.

It wasn't much of a welcome. It wasn't one of those hot jam-packed little-league sellouts where you can't get in for the length of the guestlist and where breaths are bated in anticipation of something about to turn big. Nothing of the sort. Down in the basement confines of a celebrated Islington watering hole it was relaxed and cool.

In front of the intimate stage, though, a gaggle of about a dozen or so modern boys staked out their territorial rights like there was some sort of conspiracy afoot. Minions were dispatched to fetch the pints. The space stage-front was jealously guarded. Their spick and span muted green tribal colours set them apart from the otherwise dowdy crowd.

They had come, heaven knows where from, for Joy Division. Another Manchester Band.

The last time somebody counted there were somewhere in the region of 72 musical aggregations in Manchester and surrounding areas. Can you believe that?

Since the Pistols played the Free Trade Hall with the fledgling Buzzcocks, Manchester's home-grown activity has bloomed. It's become a vital and rich part of the English music spectrum and will be more so with the increasing nationwide diversity of music and lifestyle.

> "WE LIKE TO THINK WE INFLUENCE IAN AS MUCH AS HE INFLUENCES US"
> PETER HOOK

But with the exception of passing enigmas such as Jilted John, The Fall and John Cooper Clarke, the main bearers of the Mancunian standard have been the Shelley/Devoto axis. And unless one of the snotty, smart, toothsome pop outfits that seem to populate the city lucks into a chart hit (most likely candidate: The Distractions), the band that looks dead set to follow Buzzcocks out of merely local and underground acclaim and

KEVIN CUMMINS/GETTY IMAGES

"Everyone's living in their own little world": Hook, Morris, Curtis and "Albrecht" near Manchester Cathedral, January 6, 1979

"We don't want people to know what we think": the band in St Peter's Square, Manchester, July 1979

PENNIE SMITH

into the wider limelight – going not least on the rapturous critical reaction to their first album *Unknown Pleasures* – is called Joy Division.

A lone overhead spot floods the centre-stage microphone and spills out onto the heads of the aforementioned gaggle of sartorial hot-shots. Heads that start to bob furiously at the first pulse of streamlined rhythm, attached to bodies that lurch back and forth, attached to legs that jerk up and down at the knee and arms that swing in a loose crawl or elbows that flap madly. It's the modern dance that everybody will be doing in the coming months – the one that has succeeded the pogo – and it's a hybrid of the style that John Lydon copped from the Rastas and the one Mary Mekon of The Mekons invented for herself.

Ignorant of this, and uncaring anyway, the huddle of sophisticated steppers is meanwhile whipping itself up into a frenzy that won't subside until Joy Division have left them utterly spent.

The spot picks out only this pool of bobbing motion, and the singer Ian Curtis. The rest of Joy Division are shrouded in darkness as they pour out their harsh metal thunder. The singer's body shakes, rocks and palpitates, a mad dervish of motion and movement all caught in that one mad spotlight.

Were you to shine a torch around this subterranean scene you would see the young, tidy faces of Joy Division and notice perhaps the ordinary neat cut of their clothes. An unremarkable image, with the barest hint of the regimental overtones of their name in the flap-pocket shirts two of them are wearing. You might also notice the growing excitement in the faces of the onlookers, by now all locking into the irresistible motion of the music. Easily the strongest new music to come out of this country this year.

It owes nothing to the after-punk cult of the amateur. If it's pop, that's purely accidental. And if it plays with musical perimeters it does so in ingenious, never pretentious, ways – by building carefully on their standard rock basis and using the sounds that can be coaxed from the instruments as textures with which to construct a song. It's a technique that anyone who listens to the radio these days will be familiar with, from "I Feel Love" to "Public Image", to give but two examples.

Insistent two/four rhythms bait the bristling surface hooks, and their powerdrive is overwhelming. Like The Stooges or early Subway Sect or even Blue Öyster Cult and Buzzcocks.

The themes of Joy Division's music are sorrowful, painful and sometimes deeply sad. Nothing as badly refracted and joyless ('scuse me) as Doll By Doll – they're too compassionate for that – but still music that gives often harrowing glimpses of confusion and alienation. Joy Division walk alone, with their heads bowed.

At least, that's my interpretation. Joy Division aren't giving anybody any clues. They don't agree with lyric sheets, and that's something they are very adamant about.

"You get people who seem to think you should put your lyrics on so you can get your message across," says bearded bass player Peter Hook with obvious disdain. "They ask us what our lyrics are about and we say, well they're whatever you hear, really. We've said to people, 'Haven't you ever been listening to a record where you've been singing a certain line and when you find what it really is you feel let down?' But they just won't admit that at all. They still wanted to know what our lyrics were about.

"Don't you think it's wrong to pin somebody down like that? Our lyrics may mean something completely different to every single individual."

Is that what you want?

"We'd like it, I suppose... It's like I just said. You could hear one thing, the bloke next to you could hear something completely different. It means something to you; it means something to him. Why cut him out?"

Why not write gibberish then? On a variation of the monkey-and-typewriter principle it's bound to mean something to someone sooner or later.

"The songs mean something personal to us, but that's not the point. It's like saying, what did Max Escher mean when he did that painting?" He points to a giant print of one of Escher's typical perspective puzzles that hangs on the wall of Manchester's Central Sound Studio, where we are now located. "He might just say, 'I was pissed.' We don't want to say anything. We don't want to influence people. We don't want people to know what we think."

Do you want to know what Joy Division think? What they feel? What makes them angry, bored, sad, amused, anything? What sort of cereal they eat in the morning? What prompts a mournful song like "Day Of The Lords" or what lies behind a lyric like "*She took my hand and turned to me and said she'd lost control again*"? You're probably curious, but I doubt that it's as important to you as the surly, defensive Hook seems to think.

That's how Hook sees it though and that's all he will tell you about himself and how he sees his music. Besides adding that "people think the lyrics are the guiding force, but we like to think that we influence Ian as much as he influences us; that if we stopped playing, Ian would never write again."

Ian, who writes the lyrics, broadly speaking shares these views, but is less reticent. He is off stage the virtual opposite of what he is on. His speaking voice is high and faltering, not swarthy and assertive, and his shyness you would not guess from his onstage abandon.

Stephen Morris, the drummer who completed the foursome a few months after Ian joined, lives, like Ian, in Macclesfield, and owns a huge record collection, partly inherited from his jazz

enthusiast father. "He took me to see Count Basie once. So I took him to see Hawkwind. He was getting all dressed up and I had to explain that, no dad, it's not that sort of concert..."

He bought his first drumkit by chopping up the furniture in his house to sell as firewood and he's still searching for that elusive copy of John Cale's *Academy In Peril*.

Which leaves only Bernard Albrecht, who plays guitar, and went to school with Peter Hook. By contrast, he is astute and eager to explain himself.

"I don't like a lot of music," he admits, "but the music I do like I get more out of than from anything else in life. I want to put the feeling that I get out of music back into music as well.

"We're not ashamed of anything we've done in the past. When we started off none of us could play. But each time we go one step forward – and that draws you on. It's like... I don't know, it's just a really good feeling. I think that's why a lot of people get disillusioned, 'cos, like, the music dries up."

While Joy Division are talking, Martin "Zero" Hannett is busy inside the small studio mixing some demos of a new version of "She's Lost Control".

Aside from managing John Cooper Clarke and running the odd live venue and a record label called Rabid, Hannett produced Magazine's first demos (and their forthcoming single), Jilted John's hit, the John Cooper Clarke and Joy Division albums, and the latter's contribution to the "Factory Sample" EP.

He works like some sort of wizard of the console, occasionally chuckling to himself as he fiddles with the digital devices he's brought in for the session. His productions are imprinted with a generous but supple use of electronics. He has the auteur's mark and the entrepreneur's eye, and in the years to come he's unlikely to fade away.

Joy Division regard Hannett as their sixth member, the fifth being manager Rob Gretton.

Gretton was the DJ at the Rafters Club back in December of '77, when Joy Division changed their name from Warsaw and played the Stiff Test/Chiswick Challenge night. Seventeen bands slugged it out – Joy Division coming on last at three in the morning and playing two songs.

Tony Wilson, presenter of the bold but badly received *So It Goes*, now Factory Records majordomo, was in the audience. "The bands were all good and they were all boring. But Joy Division were wonderful and they had something to say. I thought so and so did Rob, 'cause after that he became their manager."

Wilson recalls another incident from that night. He was sitting next to someone whom he later found out was Ian Curtis, and this someone turned to him, by way of introduction, and said, "You bastard. You put Buzzcocks and Sex Pistols and Magazine and all those others on the telly, what about us then?"

As events turned out, Wilson paid for the recording and release of Joy Division's first album out of his own pocket. Ten thousand copies were pressed for a total cost of £8,500. If all the copies sell, and it's likely that they will, Wilson will recoup his money, and both he and the band will show a profit.

Wilson can afford to be altruistic, since his main income comes from his work as a TV journalist for Granada. Nevertheless the album, *Unknown Pleasures*, is pressed and packaged to the standard of any other release, if not better, and it's readily available if you shop around for under three quid.

It's relatively easy to trace the stealthy progress Joy Division have made from their aggressive, noisy, unkempt beginnings in '77 to the superb controlled heat they generate now. The former is documented for posterity on Virgin's *Electric Circus* album, the transition caught on their own "An Ideal For Living" EP, and a glimpse of their current form was provided by their two tracks on the "Factory Sample".

But up until now Joy Division have been dogged by business problems, stalled by personal problems, and ignored. They mistrust the glowing reviews they now get, and wait, dispassionately, for the backlash.

Being on the outside has made them very insular and possessive about their music. It has also given them their strength; not a resentful, we'll-show-'em sort of strength, but the satisfaction they derive from their music.

"All the business side – that really fucks you up," moans Peter. "Once you get back in the rehearsal room and there's just the four of us with instruments, we're back where we started. It still hangs over you like a cloud – but once you get your instrument you're free..."

"You're always working to the next song," says Ian. "No matter how many songs you've done, you're always looking for the next one. Basically we play what we want. It'd be very easy for us to say: well, all these people seem to like such and such a song... it'd be easy to knock out another one. But we don't.

"We don't want to get diluted, really, and by staying at Factory at the moment we're free to do what we want. There's no-one restricting us or the music – or even the artwork and promotion. You get bands that are given huge advances – loans really – but what do they spend it on? What is all that money going to get? Is it going to make the music any better?"

Well, it'll buy more equipment. Whether that makes the music any better is a moot point... But we digress.

"Another good thing about it," says Stephen, from the heart, "is if you've got some sort of frustration, something eating you, something you perhaps couldn't talk to anybody about – you can get it out just by playing."

"The thing is, if you've got a brain," explains Peter, "obviously you want to do something with your life, or whatever. I'm sure a lot of people feel like that. Now that we've got this, we don't."

Ian disagrees: "You say that and you're taking away someone's self-respect. It's like that group – what were they called? – someone wrote a song about women at home, and they said, 'This is a song about all the women who should be out doing what they want.' That's taking away someone's self-respect."

Bernard takes up the issue: "People who don't like what they're doing either go one way or another. They get out and do something else – whether it's going off round the world or forming a group or even living the rest of their lives on the dole – and it takes a bit of courage to do that. Or they just settle down at work and just take the weight of the job on their shoulders – which also takes a lot of courage.

"It's terribly sad, but then there's a vast amount of people who don't even think about it. All they want is a pint every night and two weeks in Benidorm every year.

"And then I bet there are people who think we're stupid because we're going into a position where there's no security – it's not going to last us a lifetime.

"That's why we don't want to state what people should be and how they should interpret our songs, because you just can't say whether someone's right and someone's wrong. Both people can be right at the same time."

"Everyone's living in their own little world," reflects Ian. "When I was about 15 or 16 at school, I used to talk with me mates and we'd say, 'Right, as soon as we leave we'll be down in London, doing something nobody else is doing.'

"Then I used to work in a factory, and I was really happy because I could daydream all day. All I had to do was push this wagon with cotton things in it up and down. But I didn't have to think. I could think about the weekend, imagine what I was going to spend me money on, which LP I was going to buy... You can live in your own little world."

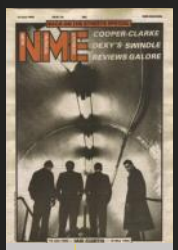
Too true. But whichever world you choose to live in, the chances are it'll sooner rather than later coincide with Joy Division's. They're here to stay.

And one more thing... All over Manchester the sewers have collapsed, the sewage pipes choosing the moment almost to the day to simultaneously end their century-long lifespan and fill the streets with a foul stench. But what you make of that is up to you...

> **"BY STAYING AT FACTORY WE'RE FREE TO DO WHAT WE WANT"**
> **IAN CURTIS**

Joy Division at Bowdon Vale Youth Club in Altrincham, March 14, 1979

MARTIN O'NEILL/REDFERNS



NME 14/6/80

THE death of Ian Curtis, lead singer of highly rated Manchester band Joy Division, has provided the biggest shock of the past few weeks. Curtis, who was 23, took his own life – apparently following a domestic upheaval. The band had completed a new album called *Closer* shortly before the tragedy and this is to be released by Factory records on June 27 – preceded this weekend by the single "Love Will Tear Us Apart".

ROB VERHORST/REDFERNS

Heart and soul: Ian Curtis with Joy Division at the Lantaren club, Rotterdam, January 16, 1980 – four months before his death

JOY DIVISION

CLOSER

The weight on their shoulders – the last days of Joy Division produce a morbid masterpiece. | *By* **PETER WATTS**

"THE music was pretty cheerful – it was just that twat's lyrics," Bernard Sumner once insisted when looking back at *Closer*, Joy Division's masterful swansong. Sumner's valiant attempt to separate the brilliant but death-laden *Closer* from the context of its creation was understandable but doomed to fail. It was not cheerful music, and Sumner, Hook and Morris had almost as much to do with that as Ian Curtis and Martin Hannett.

The songs for *Closer* were written in two splurges – "Atrocity Exhibition", "Passover", "Colony", "A Means To An End" and "Twenty Four Hours" were written and being performed in late '79; "Isolation", "Heart And Soul", "The Eternal" and "Decades" followed early in '80, after Hannett had introduced Sumner to Transcendent 2000 and ARP Omni 2 synths and got Morris to try out digital drum effects. Sessions started in the Stockport studio where Joy Division had recorded *Unknown Pleasures* the previous April, but didn't work out so everyone relocated to London. The band, along with producer Hannett, manager Rob Gretton and Curtis's new girlfriend Annik Honoré lived in two separate houses in Marylebone during the three weeks of recording at Pink Floyd's old studio, Britannia Row in Islington.

This was where Floyd had recorded parts of their two most depressing albums, *Animals* and *The Wall*, and some of that residual paranoia and claustrophobia, enhanced by Hannett's prodigious chemical intake, seeped into the sound of *Closer*. Only, while Roger Waters blamed everybody else for his own unhappiness, Curtis turned his rage inwards. Curtis's mood was affected by the drugs he was taking for his worsening epilepsy as well as the guilt he felt around his betrayal of his wife with his new girlfriend. Sumner, Hook and Morris have all said they didn't pay much attention to the lyrics, or if they did, they simply thought Curtis was a master at expressing other people's misery – and that is believable: musicians are often so focused on getting their own parts right, they ignore the detail of what others are doing other than how it dovetails with their own playing. But they still collectively created the brooding, melancholic vehicles like "Atrocity Exhibition" and the glacial "The Eternal" for Curtis to work with. These were funereal songs even before Hannett came in to accentuate the Gothic. Something like the dance-punk of "Isolation" could possibly by described as "cheerful", but you'd struggle to say the same about "Passover" or "Decades" with a straight face.

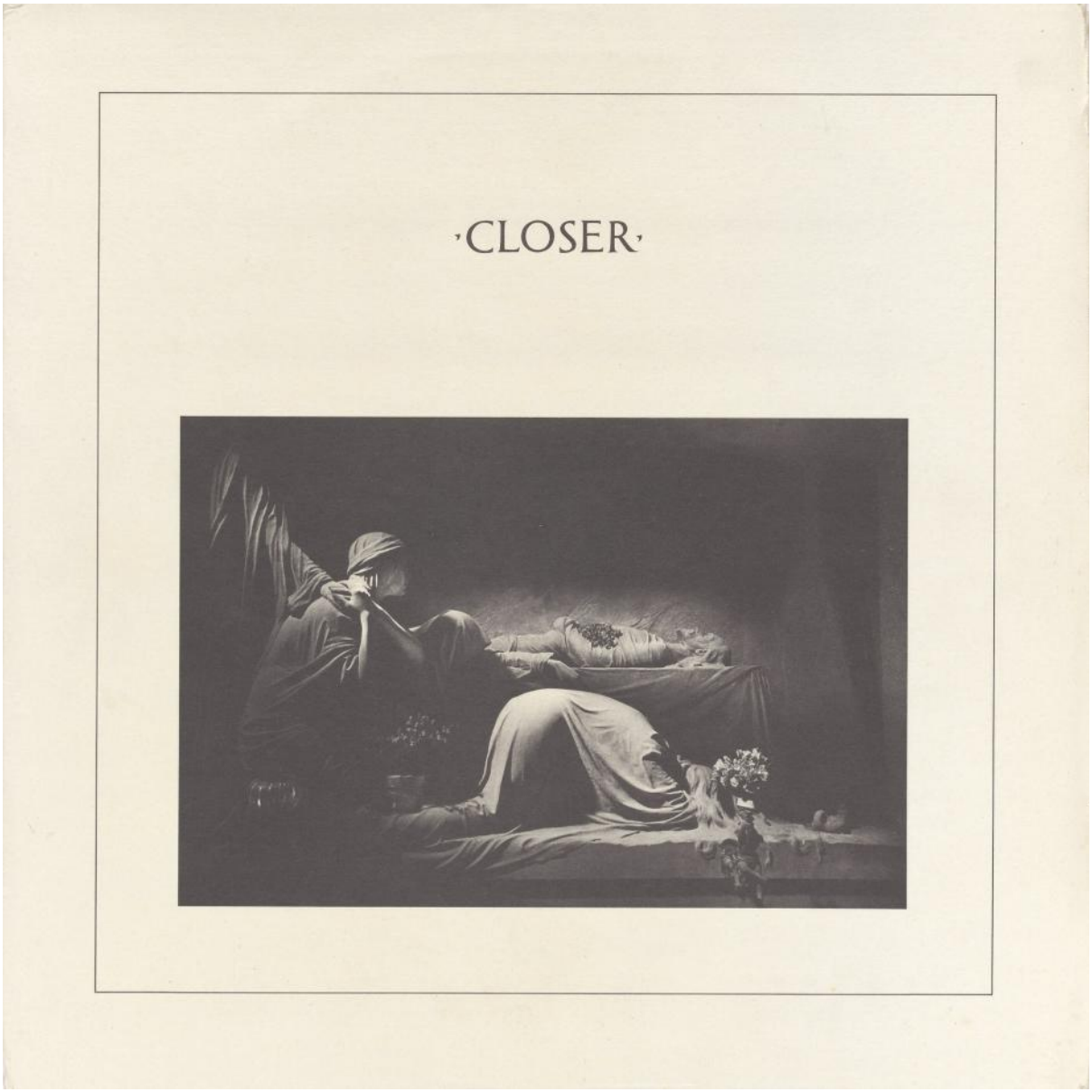
Thanks to Hannett and Curtis, *Closer* had a unique atmosphere, but it also had a sequence of extraordinary songs locked round Hook's incessant bass, Morris's skittering drums and Sumner's repetitive, guttural guitar and synth. This dance-like use of intensifying repetition and a loud-quiet-loud dynamic were significant elements of the Joy Division armoury, and these applied also to Curtis's lyrics. Phrases were repeated over and over and over again like political or religious slogans, increasing in volume and intensity: *"God in his wisdom made you understand"*, *"This is the way, step inside"*, *"I put my trust in you"*, *"Where have they been?"* It's these lines more than the song titles and melodic hooks that inveigle their way into the brain.

Hook and Sumner both expressed dissatisfaction with Hannett's production, which they felt blunted rather than enhanced the impact of the songs by toning down the aggression of their live performances. Hook was particularly annoyed about

CRITICS' VERDICTS

"It's a far cry from the almost suffocating, claustrophobic world of their debut album, but the concerns are stil the same. The best rock music has always dealt head-on with emotions and thought rather than clichéd stances." PAULO HEWITT, MM, JULY 26, 1980

"*Closer* is as magnificent a memorial (for JD as much as for Ian Curtis) as anypost-Presley popular musician could have." CHARLES SHAAR MURRAY, NME, JULY 19, 1980



TRACK MARKS

1. Atrocity Exhibition ★★★★★
2. Isolation ★★★★★
3. Passover ★★★★
4. Colony ★★★★★
5. A Means To An End ★★★★★
6. Heart And Soul ★★★★★
7. Twenty Four Hours ★★★★
8. The Eternal ★★★★
9. Decades ★★★★★

Label: Factory
Produced by: Martin Hannett
Recorded at: Britannia Row Studios, Islington
Personnel: Ian Curtis (vocal, guitar, melodica), Bernard Sumner (guitar, bass, synth), Peter Hook (bass, guitar, six-string bass), Stephen Morris (drums, electronic drums, percussion)
Highest chart position: UK 6; US –

"Atrocity Exhibition" given that he wrote the guitar part, having swapped roles with Sumner out of boredom. Live versions of "Atrocity Exhibition" are inordinately violent, but the studio version has a more sustained and eerie menace, opening with Morris's rolling drumbeat but defined by the growling and rustling effects that sound like an audience of demons from Dante's *Inferno*. *"For entertainment they watch his body twist,"* sings Curtis – a line that can easily be misheard as "twitch" – the first of numerous premonitions of impending death. It doesn't require any hindsight to note that Curtis's lyrics display a self-doubt that often crosses into self-hate. *"I'm ashamed of the person I am,"* he sings on the disco rattle of "Isolation", while the relentless juggernaut of "Passover" has him contemplating *"a crisis I knew had to come... can I go on with this train of events, disturbing and purging my mind"* in his unique sepulchral croon. "Passover" ends with just Morris's drum pattern, spluttering towards its end like a failing heartbeat. The juddering "Colony" even begins with the line *"A cry for help,"* while the strange and unnervingly bleak "The Eternal" has him observing a funeral procession with something approaching resignation.

That's one of four songs enhanced by Sumner's supreme and understated use of synth. While these contain hints of the future, most markedly in the dancey patterns of "Isolation" and "Heart And Soul", Curtis's vocals are so essential to the spirit of *Closer* that it can be hard to hear how Joy Division would ever become New Order. But reminders of the other three's agency come in moments of individual invention – Hook's bass intro to "Twenty Four Hours", Sumner's economic riffs on "A Means To An End" or Morris's magnificent robotic drumming throughout, as he repeatedly demonstrates his ability to sound like he's using a drum machine even when he's not. And when all four come together, it's extraordinary. *"Here are the young men, the weight on their shoulders,"* sings Curtis at the start of the suffocating final track, "Decades", and it seems as if he is talking about a band who, together like pallbearers, are carrying the pain of a generation and generations of young men to come.

THE album's deathly feel was cemented by the cover photograph of a Genovese tomb, an image selected by all four band members and which prompted much reconsideration after Curtis's death. That came in May, about a month after recording had finished. The release was put back until July, in which time the non-album classic "Love Will Tear Us Apart" went to No 13 (and it says much about *Closer*'s majesty that the album does not suffer for this song's absence). *Closer* also went on to chart, becoming one of the most morbid commercial successes in musical history.

You could get counterfactual forever about what might have happened had Curtis not died but that seems fairly pointless when faced with the reality of *Closer*, which remains an astonishing accomplishment of miserable beauty and as articulate an expression of pain and confusion as has ever been set to music. What Curtis's death did provide was closure, allowing the surviving band members to move on from the milestone of *Closer*, shed the sombre clothing of Joy Division and, eventually, evolve into something very different indeed.

CLOSER WAS ONE OF THE MOST MORBID COMMERCIAL SUCCESSES IN MUSICAL HISTORY

"WE DIDN'T KNOW HE WAS APPROACHING BREAKING POINT"

30 YEARS AFTER THE DEATH OF IAN CURTIS, THE SURVIVING MEMBERS OF JOY DIVISION RECALL THE MAKING OF THE BAND'S FINAL ALBUM *CLOSER*. "WE'D FINALLY GOT WHERE WE WERE AIMING FOR," BERNARD SUMNER TELLS STEPHEN DALTON. "WE WERE ON THE CUSP."

JOY DIVISION arrived in London in March 1980 to begin work on what would become *Closer*, their second album. The previous year had seen the band's fortunes rise in a frantic, occasionally troubling, way, and the prospect of escaping from Manchester for a few weeks was enticing – not least to Ian Curtis who, away from his wife, Deborah, could live openly with Annik Honoré, a Belgian girl he had met at a London show the previous August.

Tony Wilson, the owner of Factory Records, installed them in a pair of adjoining flats on York Street, between Baker Street and Marylebone on the edge of the West End. Peter Hook, Stephen Morris and the band's manager, Rob Gretton – "The loud bastards", as Hook describes the trio – settled into one. "They weren't very luxurious but to us, coming from Salford, the fact that they had an indoor toilet and a big kitchen was great."

Curtis, Bernard Sumner and Martin Hannett, the producer, established themselves in the other, opposite, along with Honoré. "They had the cultural flat," remembers Morris. The loud bastards' flat, he recalls, had a larger population of mice.

"They were the boorish, unimaginative lot, we were the creative backbone, there to make the album," says Sumner. "I was sleeping in the lounge, on a dining table. But we didn't spend much time there; we were making the album at night."

"A more musing, intellectual flat," Hook suggests, but all of Joy Division were entirely capable of boorish behaviour, not least Sumner and Curtis. The band would turn up at Britannia Row Studios, Islington, in the late afternoon, and work through the night, subject to Hannett's whims. Free to put the speakers wherever they wanted, they had the run of the place. "Very good for creativity," says Sumner.

> "ONE NIGHT WE PHONED JOHN PEEL AT FOUR IN THE MORNING, AT HOME. IT WAS IAN'S IDEA. I THINK PEEL TOLD US TO FUCK OFF. WE DIDN'T TELL HIM IT WAS JOY DIVISION"
> **BERNARD SUMNER**

"One night, we found John Peel's phone number on reception and phoned him up at four o'clock in the morning, at home. It was Ian's idea. I think Peel told us to go and fuck off. We didn't tell him it was Joy Division.

"Me, Barney and Rob had a terribly evil sense of humour," says Hook. "We would wind Ian up.

PIERRE RENE-WORMS

The eyes have it: Ian in the spotlight at Les Bains Douches, Paris, December 18, 1979

"We were the creative backbone": Curtis and Sumner, August 1979

From a working-class point of view, we were used to getting our own way with the women we knew. Then along came Annik, who was a strong woman. She just went, 'Fuck off!' I'd never met anyone like Annik before. We were always messing about and she hated it. She's Belgian, for fuck's sake. They weren't blessed with a sense of humour. Every time her and Ian went out, we'd fuck around, tip the beds up, string her knickers off the lights, just stupid things. And then when Ian came back, he obviously had to defend her honour. She was going fucking apeshit."

"The strange contradiction with Joy Division was, it was a laugh being in that band," says Sumner. "We had lots of jolly japery, it was a real good time. But I guess everybody's got two aspects of their personality, at least, and the music reflected the other aspect of everyone's personality. With Ian, there were definitely two agendas going on, but I can only really say that with hindsight, because at the time the only clue to his darker side were his lyrics. And we never listened to his lyrics.

"We were very much a band, but very much not a band. The way I like to think of it was, we were all stood on our own pedestals, and there was no cross-fertilisation. We were all making our own record, and we didn't really talk about it. Which I guess contributed to the rather unusual sound we came up with. No-one sat down and said, 'Have you read Ian's lyrics, they're a bit...' because he was a normal, happy guy. It was very difficult to tell with Ian what he could and couldn't handle. We had no idea – we hadn't known him that long. We didn't know he was approaching his breaking point."

HINDSIGHT has endowed the making of *Closer*, Joy Division's second album, with all manner of terrible intimations. Entire theses may well have been written parsing Curtis' every action in the months running up to his suicide, seeing harbingers of doom in the most mundane acts.

The real story of *Closer*, though, is less melodramatic and poetic, and a lot more human and complex. It is about spirited young men on the cusp of fame, still uncomfortable with the idea of discussing – or even confronting – each others' emotions. As 1979 came to a close, the quartet found themselves at the centre of a burgeoning cult, with June's *Unknown Pleasures* having attracted the attention of Warner Brothers US. Using Hannett as a conduit, the label offered Joy Division – or at least Tony Wilson and Factory – £1 million for distribution rights and videos.

"We never heard about it," a rueful Morris says now. "The solution Factory came up with was to send Martin and [sleeve designer] Peter Saville to do the negotiating. That's why it never happened. If it was us, and somebody had offered us a substantial sum of money, we would have taken it."

"Martin had arranged it," adds Hook. "An A&R man came down. Martin was very upset, because he felt that was definitely the way to go. He'd been instrumental in getting this whole thing together and Rob and Tony [Wilson] just laughed at it. I think Martin had no illusions that people like Warners could have made life very easy for us, and made us huge."

Meanwhile, the band themselves innocently got on with their business in Cheetham Hill, more or less fumbling towards transcendence. Their rehearsal room was opposite North Salford Youth Club, where Hook and Sumner had hung out as 14-year-olds. Here, between plays of *Low* and *"Heroes"*, Iggy's Bowie albums and Kraftwerk, the songs of *Closer* began to take shape.

"We wrote a tune a week," says Hook. "You could only practice for two hours on a Wednesday and three hours on a Sunday, which used to cost us 50p an hour. And the songs were mainly instigated on Sunday and finished off on Wednesday. We were on £1.50 a day during the whole of Joy Division. Unfortunately, we were happy on £1.50 a day."

By early 1980, nearly all of the tracks that would make up *Closer* were at least half-written.

"I'd say they were all written," reckons Hook, "but then Martin [Hannett] got involved in adding more parts."

"We'd all do our own thing," says Sumner. "We didn't really jam, we didn't talk to each other about it. It was a pleasurable time, but with a certain uncertainty about Ian, because of his health. We'd finally got where we were aiming for, and America was beckoning. We were on the cusp, we were fantastic live. But on the other hand, we worried about Ian's fits."

Curtis' epilepsy had started affecting Joy Division shows seriously when the band toured with the Buzzcocks in October 1979. "Really, we should have stopped then, but we didn't, we just

PENNIE SMITH

carried on," admits Morris. In January 1980, the band made a chilly tour of the Netherlands, Belgium and Germany, unveiling some putative versions – untouched by Hannett – of the *Closer* material. With a comical austerity typical of the band, their haircuts were administered by Rob Gretton. Six more UK gigs in February followed, before the band returned to where they'd recorded *Unknown Pleasures* (owned by 10cc and disapproved of by Sumner: "We didn't like the sound in there, it was real '70s gear, carpets on the wall. Everything was dead") for a first attempt at one of the new songs.

"'Love Will Tear Us Apart' came about due to the bass riff," says Hook, "and me and Steve getting the backing track. There's hardly any keyboards and on the first version there's hardly any guitar. It was written quite simply."

Morris: "Martin [Hannett] was into sonic experimentation. It was 'fuck what the band want'. He wanted to make a classic record. 'Love Will Tear Us Apart' is best described as a war of attrition. You'd do it, then you'd think you'd done it, and then you'd do it again and again and again..."

Sumner: "We were unhappy with the results. It was this constant to-ing and fro-ing with Martin. We all thought his production on *Unknown Pleasures* was really interesting, but it just didn't catch the power of the band live. Peter Hook and I were keen for it not to happen again. We were constantly pushing him to make the sound more powerful."

Hook: "Tony felt the songs we were writing were slower and darker, which I think you can safely say *Closer* is. I don't know whether it was half in jest, but Tony suggested Ian listen to Frank Sinatra. And then Rob went out and bought him some Sinatra records and Ian did get into listening to Sinatra, which was quite funny. Quite nice, actually."

Sumner: "We were at our friend Jasmine's house in Walthamstow, before we got the ferry to go out to Europe [for live dates], and Frank Sinatra came on the telly. Ian said, 'Frank Sinatra's great.' Either me or Rob went, 'No, he's shit.' 'No, he's great.' 'No, he's fucking SHIT!' 'You don't know what you're talking about, he's fucking GREAT!' And the whole argument escalated... I think Ian sang like Frank Sinatra on 'Love Will Tear Us Apart' to fuck us off."

BY the end of the Strawberry Studios session, however, the band were still unsatisfied with "Love Will Tear Us Apart". Soon after, they moved the operation down to London, settled into their new flats and, on Monday, March 17, began a formal three-week session for *Closer* at Britannia Row. "In the short time since *Unknown Pleasures*, they'd moved from buying out-of-hours time at Strawberry Studios to having a 24-hour lockout at Britannia Row," says Terry Mason, Joy Division's tour manager.

"Strawberry was pretty plush," remembers Sumner, "but at Britannia Row, at lunchtime on the first day, the receptionist brought us tea and sandwiches. I had ham and tomato with a little bit of horseradish. We thought, 'Fucking hell, we've made it now. I can get used to this.' It was a pretty nice studio, the desk was kind of old-fashioned, but the sound was phenomenal. The sounds of the speakers were a lot of the inspiration for the sonics on *Closer*, and also a big part of the sonics on 'Blue Monday', which we made in the same studio. The room sounded fantastic; I'd never heard bass like that before."

> "TONY SUGGESTED IAN LISTEN TO FRANK SINATRA, AND IAN DID GET INTO IT, WHICH WAS QUITE FUNNY. QUITE NICE ACTUALLY"
> PETER HOOK

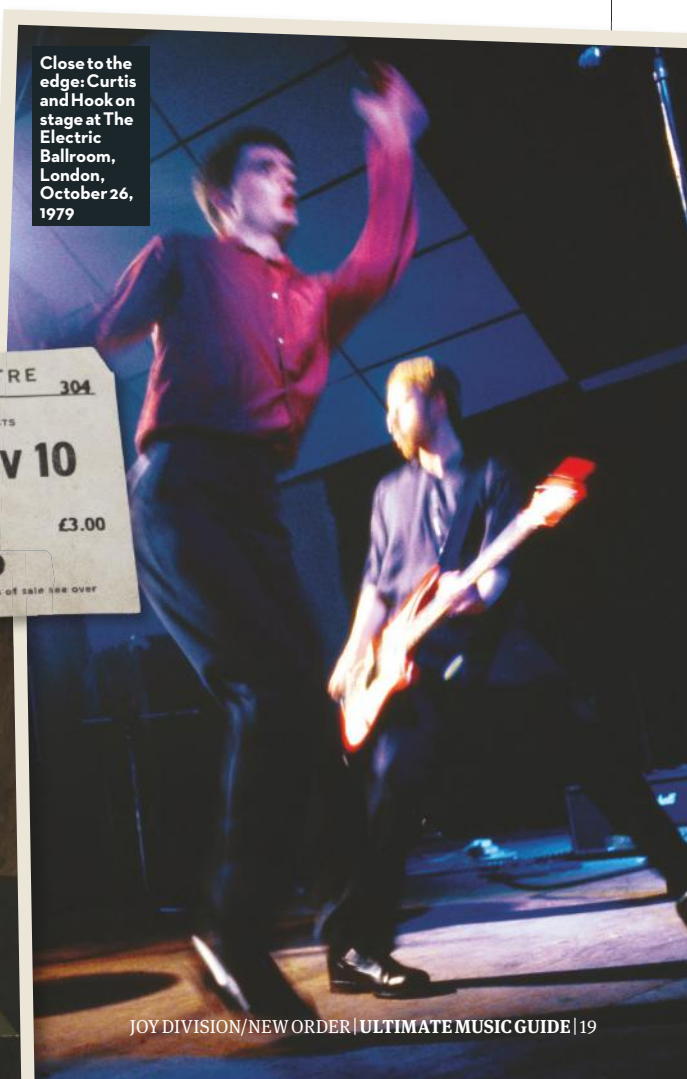
Michael Johnson, the house engineer at Britannia Row, had been away in the States on *The Wall* tour with the studio's owners, Pink Floyd. "When I came back," he recalls, "I was assigned to this band I didn't know anything about. It wasn't that flash a studio, to be honest, it was kind of rough and ready then. The studio had gone from being Pink Floyd's base to being a commercial studio, so at that point there wasn't even a lounge for the artists. They used to use the reception area when the rest of the building had gone home. Ian would go upstairs to listen to a record-player in one of the offices, things like a Frank Sinatra record. He did his vocals in a few days; it didn't take him very long. After that, we never really saw him again."

Terry Mason claims that "the band started with the intention of working reasonable hours, but that seemed to go out of the window very quickly" – inevitable, perhaps, when they were working with someone like Hannett, who was also chainsmoking joints.

Hook: "Martin insisted that we work through the night, because he felt the vibes were better, a condition that Bernard caught off him after that. We were all moaning about it. Martin was a bastard when he felt it wasn't going well. But on *Closer*, he was at his best. He introduced us to sequencers, which we used on the more dreamy tracks."

Sumner: "We messed about with ambient noises on *Unknown Pleasures*, but I don't think we had any keyboards then. For *Closer*, Martin brought a big ARP modular system in, which sounded great, but it'd take a day for him to get a bass drum sound on it, plugging cables in when he was stoned. He just had a very guess-what-I'm-thinking attitude. He liked his drugs, did Martin, and whatever mood he was in depended on how many he'd had."

Morris: "On 'The Eternal', Martin's thing was, 'Right, I don't want you to play on this one at all, I just want you to make funny noises...' That's when we did the synths on the sequencer. It's quite uncanny that the sequencer fucked up – there's a big mistake in the drums in the middle of 'The



Close to the edge: Curtis and Hook on stage at The Electric Ballroom, London, October 26, 1979

A Studer 24-track at Strawberry Studios, Stockport, where *Unknown Pleasures* was made

JULIAN INGRAM / STOCKIMO / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO, CHRIS MILLS/REDFERNS

Eternal', which we couldn't figure out. We kept it in, but I should have taken that as a bit of a bad omen. I think Martin fucked about more than we did. He loved fucking about with the drummers, it gave him something to look forward to. How can I torture the drummer today? There was method in his madness, otherwise it wouldn't have worked as well as it did, but he saw his role as producer to weave a complex web of tensions, and he did that very well. He did love winding people up, particularly studio managers."

Hook: "Martin mixed the first two tracks – 'Heart And Soul' and 'The Eternal', I think – and I fell out with him because the bass was too quiet. I had a row with him, and he told me to F-off. I had to go back to Manchester for some reason, but I told Bernard and Steve to make sure the bass was loud enough – but the bastards stiffed me! Which became the story for my career..."

"They weren't friends outside of the studio," says Susanne O'Hara about the relationship between Joy Division and Hannett, her boyfriend at the time. "They never met up. Ian had a very intense relationship with Martin. I know there was a feeling between him and Ian; sometimes they were the only two who understood each other."

> "WE NEVER TALKED ABOUT MUSIC EVER. THE ONLY THING WE WOULD TALK ABOUT WAS, 'OH, WE NEED ANOTHER FAST, DANCEY ONE'"
> PETER HOOK

The rest of the band, however, were becoming a little more distanced from Curtis as, in Hook's assessment, "His illness was getting worse and his girlfriend, Annik, was getting more demanding." But though Curtis would record his vocals separately, he would sometimes listen in on the instrumental sessions. "He would encourage us to go down certain routes," continues Hook. "He wasn't musical, but he started playing quite a lot of guitar by the time we got to *Closer*. He was very amateurish, but it really had a nice charm to it.

"The most difficult person in all the bands I've been in has been Barney. If he didn't like a track, he wouldn't play on it – he was a c--- for that. He was generally the most unhelpful person, whereas Ian was so eager to please. The majority of the time it was me, Steve, Barney and Rob in the pub, nursing our one warm pint, on our £1.50 a day, while Ian got on with the vocal takes with Martin.

"Then, because he was with Annik, they would disappear off. She was there when he wrote. He definitely relied on her a lot more than us. We didn't get involved in the lyrics, because he was always so good at it. Fucking hell, I can't even remember him asking. Ian did guide vocals on all the songs, mumbling the ones he didn't have lyrics for."

"Ian changed when he was with her. He became a bit more lofty; he wasn't one of the lads," agrees Sumner. "He also became vegetarian when he was with her, which didn't go down too well. Once in Germany, we went out to a restaurant and there's this thing in Germany called schweinhacksen, which is basically pig's leg with sauerkraut. I don't know whose idea it was, but we went to a restaurant that specialised only in schweinhacksen, so Ian and Annik were sat at the opposite table eating dry bread, because that's all they could get. There was a lot of rubbing Ian up the wrong way when he was with Annik, which I thought was a bit uncalled for."

Morris: "We had to hide all evidence of meat. We were living on lamb kebabs from the shop round the corner. Ian memorably decided he was a vegetarian, then he had to have some of ours when she wasn't looking."

Sumner: "Ian got so pissed off with us taking the piss out of him and Annik that he was like, 'fuck it, they're a bunch of bastards. I'm going to leave.' But it was just reacting against the way he was being treated by the band. For a while, he wouldn't hang out with us. He started hanging out with this weird Dutch guy, this weird sycophant guy who wore T-shirts with strange slogans on. Which was daft."

"One night we all went for a meal," recalls Peter Saville. "Ian and Annik sat on another table, and every time I glanced over at them, Ian was crying. We all have relationships in our twenties and they can be pretty superficial, but it was quite plain to me that was not Ian's feeling towards her."

The crying may also have been caused by the barbiturates Curtis had been prescribed for his epilepsy, which appeared to be worsening. "The problem with barbiturates is you lose your grip on reality when you have a lot of them," explains The Durutti Column's Vini Reilly, a good friend of Curtis, "and they were giving him high doses. He'd be sat at a table and he had a line of these pills that he had to take. They left him finding it difficult to keep a grasp on things, and hold things together."

One night, Curtis went missing from the Britannia Row studio. After about an hour, Hook went looking for him and found him in the toilets. "He'd had a fit, fallen and banged his head on the basin. Ian was always his own worst enemy, because he always told you what you wanted to hear. He immediately said he was all right, didn't want to go to hospital, and he was up bouncing around like fucking Tigger. Like nothing had happened. He really was fighting it tooth and nail."

NEVERTHELESS, the sessions were progressing well, even though the band had barely discussed what they were doing. "We never talked about music ever," admits Hook. "The only thing we would talk about was, 'Oh we need another fast, dancey one.' To me that was one of the beauties of the group."

They began with the songs they were most familiar with: "Colony", "Twenty Four Hours", "Passover" and "A Means To An End". "We did 'Atrocity Exhibition' quite early on," remembers Morris. "We did it with all kinds of layers. We'd do a guide track and then a lot of overdubbing and funny little noises over the top. There were a lot more tracks other than these that ended up on [*1981 album of live tracks and rarities*] *Still*. I think 'The Sound Of Music', 'The Only Mistake', as well as the flexidisc stuff ['Komakino', released April 1980]. We hadn't learned how to fuck about yet."

"Decades", however, proved more complicated, not least because, in Sumner's words, "We had all these new synthesisers. Perhaps six months earlier, I'd built one, but I didn't really know what I was building, some sort of weird electronic machine that made sounds. I found it fascinating."

"'Decades' took a long time to sort out. It just didn't seem to be going anywhere," says Morris. "Then it suddenly turned into that Martini advert. It was kind of James Bondish. That was the first thing we agonised over. I think we might have been on the point of putting it on the flexidisc, then it just kind of happened."

Sumner also recalls "some ghostly whistling" that kept being picked up on the PA system on either "Decades" or "The Eternal", "like somebody was whistling along".

"Psychic vibes," claims Morris. "Syd Barrett came in, sat down, walked out again."

Then there was "Love Will Tear Us Apart", which the band seemed incapable of leaving alone. Michael Johnson suggests the vocal was re-recorded at Britannia Row. Sumner,

"He was fighting it tooth and nail": Forum des Halles, Paris, December 1979

PIERRE RENE-WORMS

Self-consoling: Martin Hannett at Strawberry Studios, Stockport, 1980

meanwhile, remembers, "When we insisted that the song was done again, Martin sulked. We did all the music, recorded it, and Steve went home to bed, across the other side of London. I was staying there doing the Beach Boys bit at the end on my crap 12-string guitar. It was three o'clock in the morning, everyone was happy with it, and Martin says, 'I'm not happy with it. I want Steve to double track the snare drum, and he's not here, is he?' So he got him out of bed, dragged him all across London. I think his attitude was, 'You've made me do it twice, so I'll make you do it twice.'"

MARCH 29, 1980. As the *Closer* sessions came to an end, Joy Division's wives and girlfriends – with the significant exception of Deborah Curtis – were invited down from Manchester for a visit. Morris was dispatched to pick them up. "That was just a fucking bad idea," he recalls. "I got the times wrong, left them waiting for two hours at Euston. It didn't get off to a good start, and then went downhill."

"It was disastrous," says Hook. "I don't think Ian's wife came, and everybody else's wife was as miserable as fuck. We'd been home for *Unknown Pleasures* and it literally took five days to record the album. Then when we went away for three weeks, it was a period of adjustment for us, and also our other halves were adjusting to the fact that we were away, which was at Martin Hannett's insistence. There was no communication in those days – nobody had phones and nobody had money. It was a struggle."

Another night, Michael Johnson went to answer the doorbell at the studio and found "these four little bedraggled Irishmen stood there saying, 'Is Martin Hannett here?' This was U2. They'd obviously walked from the bus stop, four little urchins, soaking wet. I can't recall how long they spent there, but they were talking to Martin about working with him.

"I walked in and saw these really skinny little young kids staring open-mouthed at Martin," says Hook. "I think I went and got the others, saying, 'Come and have a look at these turkeys, they're terrified.' Because we were 23 then, they were just kids. We were the daddies. Martin was having a meeting with them and they were practically bloody shaking. At the time, it appealed to my warped sense of humour."

Sumner: "They seemed like pretty nice chaps. I think they were Joy Division fans. I have said some bitchy things about Bono since then, but the truth is, if I'm honest, I'm a little bit jealous of them. They were our peers, but things seemed to go so smoothly for them, whereas things seemed to go disastrously wrong for us at every turn. We seemed to be ill-fated..."

By early April, *Closer* was being mixed, and Factory booked the band three shows as part of a label showcase at the Moonlight in West Hampstead – "A folly of Factory-sized proportions," says Terry Mason. "Our major preoccupation was keeping an eye on Ian to look for the signs of a seizure taking hold." On the last night, April 4, Joy Division played twice: a headline slot at the Moonlight, and earlier at a Stranglers benefit (Hugh Cornwell had just been busted for heroin), at the Rainbow in Finsbury Park. During both, Curtis suffered grand mal seizures. "I hauled Ian offstage and forced my way to the dressing rooms," continues Mason. "This time it was different. In the past, Ian would just lock up, but on the way downstairs he seemed to lose every bone in his body and was like a rag doll."

Two days later, on Easter Sunday and back at home in Macclesfield, Curtis took an overdose of barbiturates. Tony Wilson, Gretton and Lindsay Reade, Wilson's wife, were driving over to see him, playing *Closer* in the car. "I just remember thinking, 'Bloody hell, this is really amazing,'" says Reade.

Remarkably, the band's next show – in Bury, on April 8 – was not postponed. Instead, Curtis sang two songs from *Closer*, "The Eternal" and "Decades", while Alan Hempsall of Crispy Ambulance and Simon Topping of A Certain Ratio filled in for him on the other songs. "Hooky told me of Ian's suicide attempt and neither of us could understand why it was going ahead," says Mason. "It brought a new realisation of Ian's condition. After Bury, the obvious thing would have been to just shut up shop for a while, but yet again there was still the need for bringing money in to help fund the forthcoming US tour."

"It was quite handy to have the softer, quieter songs for the simple reason that Ian didn't get as wound up during the sets," adds Hook. "On the faster, rockier ones he would go off like a rocket. He sang a couple of the quiet ones in Bury, but we shouldn't have done Bury. That was a really bad mistake."

"Ian was his own worst enemy," says Hempsall. "If he'd turned around even once and gone, 'Actually guys, I'm not up for this, I can't do it,' that would have been understandable. But he

KEVIN CUMMINS/GETTY IMAGES

didn't, because he wanted the band to be a success. That was all just a by-product of people sweeping things under the carpet and pretending everything was OK."

"Rob [Gretton] said to me he thought it was a cry for help," remembers Vini Reilly. "I actually told Rob I didn't think it was a cry for help, I thought it was genuine. The fact that he told Debbie when she arrived that he'd taken an overdose was neither here nor there. He was serious – he really wanted out because he couldn't bear it any more. He was in a very dark place in his mind, but because he had the social skills and was so good at just being one of the lads and having a laugh, it was very hard to spot."

Susanne O'Hara recalls a time in early May when she was loading a film projector into the back of her Volvo. "I bent over to push it into the back seat and Ian smacked my bum," she says. "He made some remark about a nice bum. He was cheerful."

Sumner: "You never had a heart-to-heart with Ian. But he did say to me late one night that he felt like he was in a whirlpool, and it was dragging him down, and he couldn't get out of it. He also said all his lyrics seemed to be coming to very quick conclusions, like they seemed to be writing themselves.

"As far as his relationships go, his marriage [to Deborah] and being with Annik, I regarded that as his territory. There was group business, and what he wanted to do with his private life was his own business. Ian had a certain unpredictable quality as well, and his way of dealing with problems was very extreme and explosive. He wanted our music to be like that."

IN Bury, Curtis told Lindsay Reade that "he saw it going on without him. He felt very removed from it. With the epilepsy, he just knew he couldn't carry on with the performances. He'd sort of hit a pinnacle with *Closer*, and he knew he couldn't go on." Afterwards, Wilson and Reade invited Curtis to recuperate at their cottage in Charlesworth near Glossop, in rural Derbyshire. There, he wrote love letters to Honoré and, during a long phone conversation with Vini Reilly, insisted his suicide attempt was serious.

"I think he was able to tell me because I was considered loopy, anyway," says Reilly. "I was on all kinds of anti-depressants; they were messing about with medication to try and get me functioning. I think he realised that I would be a bit more *simpático* and understand that state of mind, where you are capable of ending your own life."

Wilson was busy with Factory and his day jobs – television work for *Granada Reports* and *World In Action*. "I don't think he read the signs at all, but then again the signs weren't visibly there," says Reade. "Ian was with me for a week, and he was obviously very depressed. It was just me and Ian, driving each other around the twist. I've always been very empathetic, so I ended up really depressed, too. And we didn't have a single visitor.

"Tony's father was gay, and his partner, Tony Connolly, was a very good friend of mine. He said to me he thought Ian was very depressed and would commit suicide. But the only person who saw it was Annik, as far as I'm aware. She actually warned Tony about it. She said, 'He means what he's saying.'

"None of us had really listened to the words before; they just sounded like good lyrics to us. We just didn't think he was going to go."

"I honestly thought Ian's lyrics were really brilliant, but that he was writing about somebody else," says Morris. "That's how naïve I was. I thought it was brilliant how he could get in the mind of somebody else. Even after he attempted to commit suicide, it didn't seem that he was that hell bent on destruction."

"There was never a moment when I was with Ian when he acted anything but normal," says Peter Hook. "He never, ever led me to believe for one moment that he was depressed. He never let you know what he was feeling, really. Whether that was bravado or foolishness, the thing you most wanted to hear in the world was that he was OK."

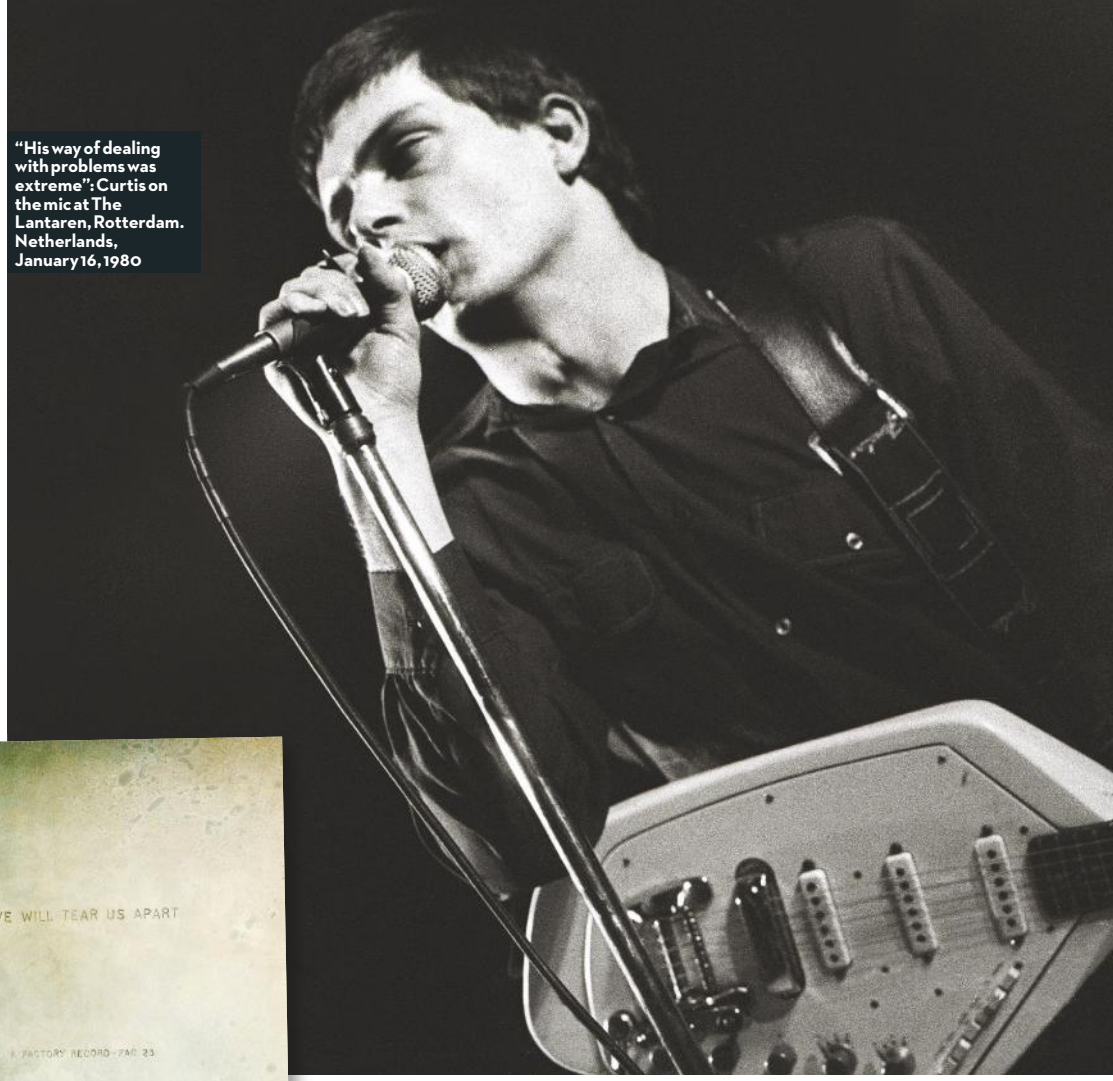
> **"I HONESTLY THOUGHT IAN'S LYRICS WERE BRILLIANT, BUT THAT HE WAS WRITING ABOUT SOMEBODY ELSE. THAT'S HOW NAIVE I WAS"**
> STEPHEN MORRIS

ON Monday May 19, Joy Division were scheduled to fly out for their debut US tour.

About midday on Sunday 18, Kevin Cummins, a photographer working for Factory who was booked on the same flight, got a call from Gretton. "'That silly cunt's killed himself.' That's all he said," remembers Cummins, "and I knew immediately who he meant. We knew Ian was a bit down about going to America, but there was no hint he was going to kill himself. Rob would've had a 24-hour guard on Ian if he thought something was going to happen."

The news was announced by John Peel on his Monday night radio show, followed by "Atmosphere". Curtis had hanged himself in his Macclesfield kitchen the previous day, discovered soon after by his wife, Deborah. The incident merited, according to Cummins, "a two-paragraph story on page eight of the *Manchester Evening News*, or something. They weren't known, they were just a local band."

In Grant Gee and Tom Atencio's documentary, *Joy Division* (2007), an epilepsy specialist analysed Curtis' prescription from the time and concluded that it was guaranteed to kill him. "They didn't know much about the condition back then," says



"His way of dealing with problems was extreme": Curtis on the mic at The Lantaren, Rotterdam, Netherlands, January 16, 1980

ROB VERHORST/REDFERNS

Hook. "That made you feel a little better, because you realised you couldn't have done anything about it anyway."

"After he died, we did listen to his words and thought, 'Well actually, this is someone who sounds like they're in a lot of trouble emotionally,'" says Sumner. "But the person you had in the room wasn't like that. And Ian wasn't in trouble emotionally until perhaps a month before he died. Then we tried everything under the sun to try and help him, but obviously he wasn't interested."

"It was a shame Annik wasn't with him, because she understood him," says Reade. "But you do blame yourself, and I did. It was horrific, the guilt I had. I also blamed Factory – Factory became very dark for me after that. They shouldn't have been doing those gigs. They should have given him some downtime."

Hook: "I can't really remember anything. The only thing I do remember was sitting in my car one morning. I went to tax my car at a place in Stretford; I drove there in my old Jag that cost £135. Just as I got there, I was listening to the Top 20 on the radio, and they went: 'New in, No 13, "Love Will Tear Us Apart" by Joy Division...' It broke my heart. It was things like that which brought home to us what we'd lost. It was awful."

The release of *Closer* was postponed until July, when it became Factory's first Top 10 album. "You've just done an album, you've put a lot of work into it, what do you do?" asks Morris. "Do you just bin it? We had made the decision we were going to carry on, but it still wasn't easy."

In fact, Sumner, Hook and Morris had resolved to continue as a band on the night of Curtis' death. By June, they had gone so far as to try out another Factory artist, Kevin Hewick, as their new frontman.

"I thought they were just doing a session as my backing band," Hewick remembers, after Tony Wilson had offered the band to him the night before a shift at Graveyard Studios in Prestwich.

"We did two of my songs, no rehearsal. Martin Hannett came in and, very droll, said it sounded like something by Fairport Convention, then lay down and fell asleep under the mixing desk. As the day wore on, I found Bernard a little edgy. At one point, he threw his guitar on the floor and stormed out. But Peter said to me, 'Bernard's taken Ian's death the worst, and he's finding it really hard, because you're standing where Ian would have stood.'

"I overheard Peter Hook tell the recording engineer that they'd decided on the New Order name the night before. When I helpfully chipped in that Ron Asheton of The Stooges had already used that name for his band, Hooky just said witheringly that only somebody like me would know that."

Now, Hook says that New Order actually began for him on the Monday after Ian Curtis was cremated (on May 23, 1980). "I really didn't care about Joy Division until years later, when we started playing the songs again as New Order. His lyrics, when you look back, say it all. We just chose not to listen. We were too inexperienced in the ways of the world. We were too young, and none of us handled it well."

Hook plays *Closer* "quite a lot" these days. "In a strange way, it seems somehow divorced from me." Morris thinks it's brilliant, and treats it similarly: "The only way you can listen to it is when you can put it on and pretend you had absolutely nothing to do with it."

Sumner, on the other hand, doesn't listen to an album that he prefers to *Unknown Pleasures*, but which he calls "very claustrophobic. It's been so long since I played it. Once the past is past, that's it."

"It was only the second bloody album we made," says Sumner. "He hung himself a bit prematurely. You shouldn't joke about these things, but..."

THE SHADOWPLAYERS

The people around Ian Curtis as he edged closer to his death

PETER HOOK
Bass guitarist for Joy Division/New Order/Freebass, DJ, author

BERNARD SUMNER
Guitarist/singer for Joy Division/New Order/Bad Lieutenant

STEPHEN MORRIS
Drummer for Joy Division/New Order/Bad Lieutenant

PETER SAVILLE
Factory Records art director and partner, and *Closer* sleeve designer

TERRY MASON
Original Joy Division manager, Joy Division/New Order tour manager

KEVIN CUMMINS
Photographer and Factory insider whose latest book is *Manchester: Looking For The Light Through The Pouring Rain*

LINDSAY READE
Ex-wife of Factory founder Tony Wilson, co-managed the Stone Roses, co-wrote Ian Curtis biography *Torn Apart*, and she is currently writing a memoir of her life with Wilson

MICHAEL JOHNSON
Assistant engineer on *Closer*, later worked with New Order, currently involved with Fallen Industries studios on the Wirral

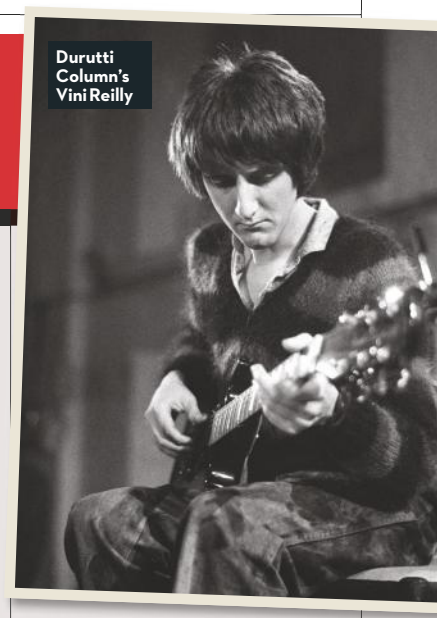
ALAN HEMPSALL
Former vocalist with Factory band Crispy Ambulance, occasional stand-in for Ian Curtis, currently working for new Manchester listings magazine *Chimp*

KEVIN HEWICK
Factory-signed singer-songwriter, briefly considered to replace Ian Curtis, still recording and touring

SUSANNE O'HARA
Former partner of producer Martin Hannett, attended *Closer* sessions

VINI REILLY
Guitarist and leader of The Durutti Column, and friend of Ian Curtis

Kevin Cummins: brew faith


Durutti Column's Vini Reilly

KEVIN CUMMINS/GETTY IMAGES, DAVID CORIO/REDFERNS

JOY DIVISION

STILL

A ragbag testament of offcuts and ephemera – and occasional glimmers of what might have been. | *By* **LOUIS PATTISON**

OCTOBER 1981, 17 months after the death of Ian Curtis, *Still* finally found its way into the world. Any accusation of delay might be laid at the feet of Factory Records designer Peter Saville, who had been hard at work labouring to create the perfect package. Four sides of vinyl presented in a gatefold sleeve wrapped in slate-grey hessian cloth and bound with a white or pale-blue ribbon, the presentation of *Still*'s limited-edition hardcover release had the gravity of an order of service at a funeral, or the blank formality of a last will and testament. That, combined with the title, seemed to say it all: Joy Division ends here.

You could probably build an argument that *Still*'s contents, in ways, struggled to live up to its sumptuous packaging. If Joy Division's first two albums felt conceptually perfect – flawless both in execution and design – *Still* is something more uneven. In the months since Curtis's death, a clandestine industry had sprung up serving Joy Division offcuts and ephemera in bootleg form. For manager Rob Gretton, *Still* was a way to "clear the cupboard", meeting a demand for new Factory product while rendering the illicit releases largely redundant and providing Joy Division's growing band of acolytes something approaching closure.

Without anything resembling a lost album in the can, though, *Still* feels a little like a bootleg itself. It's a grab-bag of material from throughout the band's lifespan – nine mostly unreleased Martin Hannett productions, a couple of B-sides, and live material including a recording of Joy Division's last ever concert at Birmingham University's High Hall in May 1980. But even given what was available, *Still*'s tracklisting is eccentric, apparently plotted to frustrate completists. Included here is "Glass", first available on Factory's debut release "A Factory Sample" – but not its accompanying A-side, "Digital". Also included is 1980's "Dead Souls", which first appeared on the French-only "Licht Und Blindheit" single released by Sordide Sentimental – but not its widely celebrated A-side, "Atmosphere". Meanwhile, if one were trying to argue for the sanctification of Joy Division, one would probably not reach for their end-of-the-night jam through The Velvet Underground's "Sister Ray", recorded live at London's Moonlight Club in April 1980. It's not unenjoyable exactly, but if the band had played the song more than a half-dozen times before this outing, it does not show. And it does offer the chance to witness that rare thing, a moment of Ian Curtis levity: "You should hear our version of 'Louie Louie'..." he quips as the track lurches to an awkward end.

Still can at times feel perfunctory. In the hands of other bands, "The Only Mistake" and "Something Must Break" might stand out as highlights, but placed alongside much of the rest of Joy Division's catalogue they feel rather by-numbers. All the same, if it lacks the high standards and careful sequencing of *Unknown Pleasures* and *Closer*, *Still* does show Joy Division from new, exciting angles. The nine studio recordings that kick off the record capture Joy Division at their most frigid and violent. The punkier tracks date back to the band's first incarnation as Warsaw: "Ice Age" resembles a desperate communique beamed back from a nuclear winter of the near-future (recorded in the same session as "Atmosphere", its white-knuckle intensity is in part because it was accidentally mastered at the wrong speed, a semitone too fast). "They Walked In Line" is perhaps Joy Division's plainest flirtation with totalitarian aesthetics, Curtis's

CRITICS' VERDICTS

"*Still* – a commemorative double LP – shows the humility of Joy Division beneath the ice-sculpted productions of the past."
NEIL ROWLAND, MM, 17/10/81

"The two live sides work as a patchy retrospective, despite the fact the synths went horribly awry on most of the *Closer* material."
CHRIS BOHN, NME, 17/10/81

lyrics addressing conformity and the banality of evil as percussion beats like the march of a thousand jackboots. Elsewhere, we hear the group pushing their sound into increasingly alien vistas – see "Exercise One", which rises out of a ghostly trench of feedback, Sumner conjuring abattoir squeals from his guitar.

It's hard to deny that some of the uneasy power of *Still* derives from its circumstance as a posthumous document – the sensation that these songs in some way issue back from beyond the grave. "The Sound Of Music" finds Ian Curtis shunning metaphor to describe his tortured state of mind with awful clarity – self-hatred, relationships withering, life on a downward spiral. But there's a thrill in the way it builds to a climax that is both ironic and exultant. "*Love of life/Makes you feel higher...*", he barks, and he sounds otherworldly, possessed.

Meanwhile, "Dead Souls" is one of the highlights of Joy Division's late-period run. The song has a deft sense of ebb and flow, gently receding before roaring back in on Morris' broiling tom rolls. The title is a reference to a book by the Russian dramatist Nikolai Gogol, but in Curtis's hands, the song becomes the cry of a hapless figure harangued by the voices of the dead: "*They keep calling me/Keep on calling me!*" If there is a somewhat morbid frisson to *Still*, that was very much the Factory way. Carved around the vinyl's run-out groove, you could read the enigmatic phrases "The Chicken Won't Stop" and on Side Four, "The Chicken Stops Here" – references to the closing suicide scene in Werner Herzog's *Stroszek*, the film that Ian Curtis watched on his last night alive.

THE NINE STUDIO RECORDINGS CAPTURE JOY DIVISION AT THEIR MOST FRIGID AND VIOLENT

ELSEWHERE, the live stuff is serviceable – passable fidelity, fine takes on "Isolation" and "Shadowplay", the odd bum note. But it does provide a tantalising glimpse of where Joy Division might have gone next. In January 1981, nine months before *Still* entered the world, New Order had released their debut single "Ceremony" – and, indeed, re-released it in September with added guitar from new member Gillian Gilbert. But on *Still* we get to hear how Joy Division played it in its only live outing. Well, we almost hear it – as technical problems leave Curtis's vocal virtually inaudible throughout the entire first verse, and muffled after that. There's just enough to indicate it would have become one of Joy Division's most treasured songs – at least the equal of "Love Will Tear Us Apart". But this is not the sort of record to dwell long on what ifs. Its purpose was to usher one chapter to a close, and clear the decks for the next. That was *Still*. Just one month later, there would be *Movement*.

TRACK MARKS

1. Exercise One ★★★★★
2. Ice Age ★★★★
3. The Sound Of Music ★★★★
4. Glass ★★★★
5. The Only Mistake ★★★
6. Walked In Line ★★★★
7. The Kill ★★★★
8. Something Must Break ★★★
9. Dead Souls ★★★★★
10. Sister Ray ★★★
11. Ceremony ★★★★★
12. Shadowplay ★★★★
13. A Means To An End ★★★
14. Passover ★★★
15. New Dawn Fades ★★★
16. Transmission ★★★★
17. Disorder ★★★
18. Isolation ★★★★
19. Decades ★★★
20. Digital ★★★★

Label: Factory
Recorded at: Strawberry Studios, Stockport; Cargo Studios, Rochdale; Pennine Sound Studios, Oldham. Live material at the Moonlight Club, London, and High Hall, Birmingham University
Produced by: Martin Hannett
Personnel: Ian Curtis (vocals, guitar, melodica), Bernard Sumner (vocals, guitar, keys, synth), Peter Hook (bass guitar, vocals), Stephen Morris (drums, percussion)
Highest chart position: UK 5; US –

NEW ORDER

MOVEMENT

Who New Order were, and who they will become. Amid gloom and despond, four musicians head towards an electronic silver lining.

By **GRAEME THOMSON**

THE first New Order album is formed from a series of questions. Should we continue? If so, how will the pieces fit together? What should we sound like? Who should sing? How do we honour the past while scoping out the future? Listening to it nearly 40 years after its release, one is reminded of Samuel Beckett's stoic mantra: *"I can't go on, I'll go on."* Little wonder that, despite its qualities, the answers it provides are often tentative and unclear.

After Ian Curtis's suicide in May 1980, the remaining three members of Joy Division quickly determined to continue making music together under a new name. By September they were debuting large chunks of new material in their live set. Their debut single, "Ceremony", and its B-side, "In A Lonely Place", would prove the sole links to their old band. The former was played live at Joy Division's final gig, barely a fortnight before Curtis's death; the latter had been demoed around the same time. These two songs had been carried over, but everything else arrived after. In the spirit of fashioning something new from the familiar, in October 1980 Gillian Gilbert, Stephen Morris's girlfriend, joined on synthesiser, adding a range of textural possibilities.

Given the circumstances, it's hardly surprising that the writing on *Movement* is, with few exceptions, hesitant. It's as though the foursome were so busy trying to work out where they all fitted that they didn't quite have sufficient energy left for the actual songs (although it should be noted that three of New Order's strongest pieces from this period – "Ceremony", "Procession" and "Everything's Gone Green" – were peeled off for release as standalone singles).

In the end, *Movement* records only a partial transformation. We hear both the band New Order were and the band they will become. "Truth" cleaves to the austere, cavernous, reverberating template of Joy Division. With its sickly synthetic rhythm, roiling bass and funereal melodica, it's a dank, claustrophobic tour de force. The guitar, when it comes, sweeps in like an avalanche.

"Doubts Even Here" possesses many of the component parts heard on *Closer* but lacks the poise and grandeur. Propped up by a classic Hook bass riff, on "ICB" a variety of distracting programmed sounds are activated, while Sumner sings so faintly he seems permanently close to disappearing. Hook later claimed the title stood for "Ian Curtis Buried", which only accentuates the gloom, lending a certain grim drama to lyrics such as *"It's so far away, and it's closing in."* The chilly, desolate wastelands of "The Him", too, seem to cling too readily to the memory of their dead bandmate. At such times, New Order sound like a band trudging miserably between the five stages of grief. Even the closing track – in fact a lively post-punk rumble with a welcome trebly energy – is called "Denial".

Yet there are also moments which foretell a far brighter future. The arrival of Gilbert had encouraged a more electronic approach to song arrangements, and

CRITICS' VERDICTS

"*Movement* is a dry, brittle affair, sometimes spacious but mostly woefully introverted. New Order seem to have settled for diagrams in place of Joy Division's rounded resonances."
ADAM SWEETING, *MELODY MAKER*, NOVEMBER 21, 1981

"Aside from a very rousing opening track, it's terrifically dull."
DANNY BAKER, *NME*, NOVEMBER 28, 1981

TRACK MARKS

1. Dreams Never End ★★★★
2. Truth ★★★★
3. Senses ★★★
4. Chosen Time ★★
5. ICB ★★★
6. The Him ★★★
7. Doubts Even Here ★★
8. Denial ★★★

Label: Factory
Produced by: Martin Hannett
Recorded at: Strawberry Studios, Stockport, April 24 – May 4, 1981
Personnel: Bernard Sumner (vocals, guitars, melodica, synthesisers, programming), Peter Hook (bass, vocals), Gillian Gilbert (synthesisers, programming, guitars, spoken words), Stephen Morris (drums, synthesisers, programming)
Highest chart position: UK 30; US –

Movement finds New Order mustering at the new frontier, grappling with the technology which will shortly offer them a much sharper point of definition.

"Chosen Time" is a scribbled blueprint for the sound on which many of their greatest songs will be founded, though it chugs along with little sense of purpose. "Senses" arrives on a jittery bed of electronic clangs, clatters and hisses, which go some way to obscuring the fact that there's not much of a song underneath it all. It gathers momentum until it becomes an oscillating slice of dark disco, a faint premonition of a funkier future to come. Indeed, much of the tension of *Movement* resides in the underlying feeling that New Order would love to cut loose a little more – perhaps even enjoy themselves – but feel it is not yet quite seemly to do so.

The glaring exception is "Dreams Never End". It feels archetypal now, but in fact what we're hearing is the archetype being built. With its rushing rhythm, Hook's high-end bass riff, arpeggiated guitar chimes and the propulsion of Morris's Sten gun hi-hat, the track builds and builds into a valiant attempt to mine some euphoria from the darkness (*"No looking back now, we're pushing through"*). Perhaps the mistake was to make "Dreams Never End" the first track on the album. Everything else rather pales by comparison.

THIS dance between new and old makes for a weirdly provisional dynamic in which everything feels unresolved. Hook's lead vocals on "Dreams Never End" and "Doubts Even Here" are testament to the fact that the songs were written when the post of lead singer was still up for grabs, with all three original members having a shot in rehearsals. As singers, both Hook and Sumner at times come close to being mere Curtis imitators, not yet confident enough in their voices (or the music they're making) to claim their own turf. It's both touching and slightly macabre. When it comes, Gilbert's blank spoken-word recitation on "Doubts Even Here" offers welcome respite.

They aren't helped much by the production. According to the band, the album was recorded in an atmosphere of sour aggravation. Martin Hannett, once again producing, was strung out on hard drugs and was at loggerheads with Factory. The group found him not just difficult but actively hostile and unsupportive. While Curtis may have been a strong enough singer to cut through the obscurant haze in which Hannett wraps the music, Sumner (and Hook) are content to disappear in it.

Raw and flawed though it undoubtedly is, perhaps *Movement*'s great achievement is simply to exist. You sense that until it was released – in a beautiful pale blue sleeve designed by Peter Saville, based on a poster by the Italian Futurist Fortunato Depero – New Order regarded themselves as little more than an outline. Painful and difficult though the process clearly was, they needed to sketch in the detail to move forward. The album title is no afterthought. This is an act of necessary motion. In the circumstances, the fact that it contains moments which shine as brightly, and as darkly, as they do, should be regarded as admirable, perhaps even a little heroic.

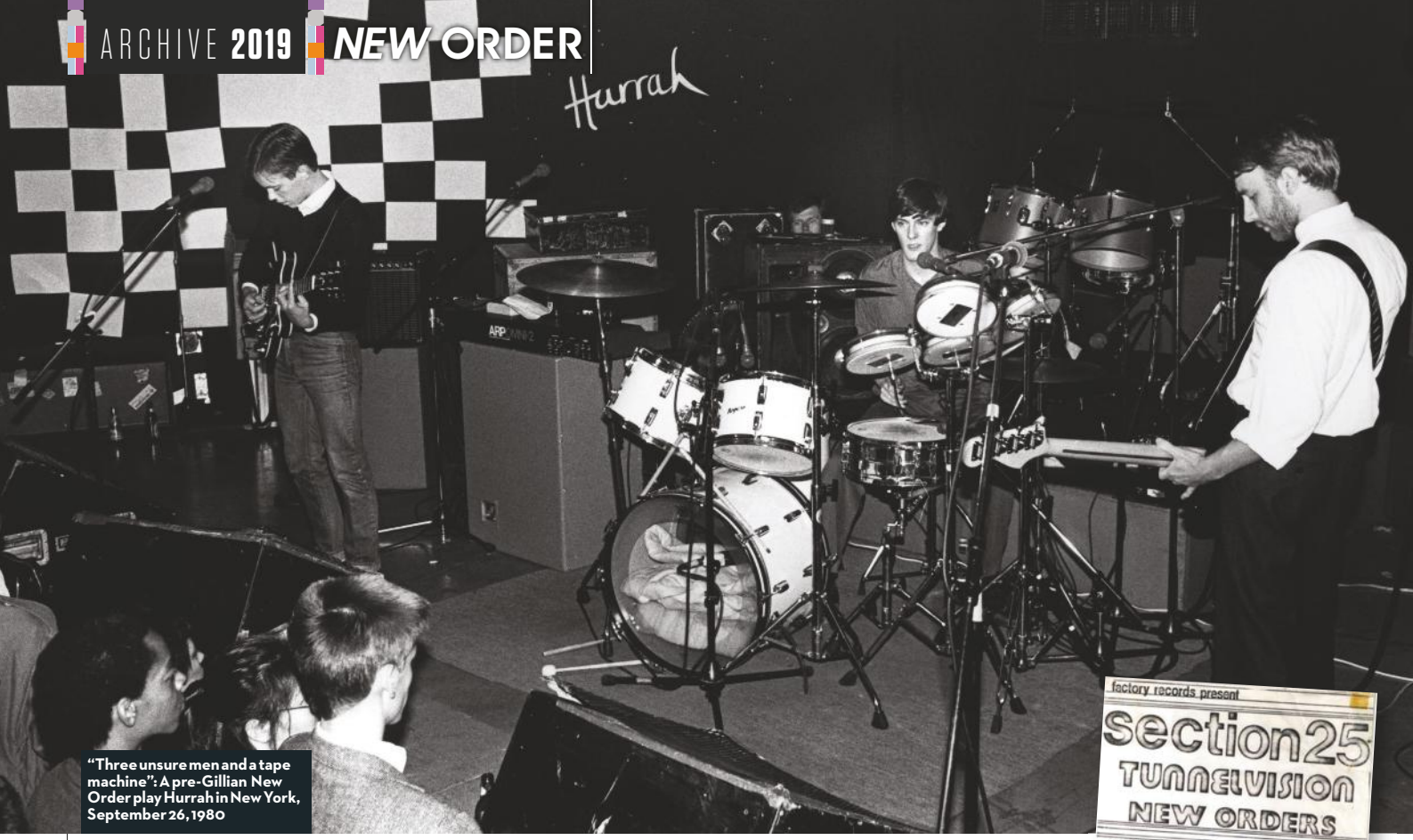
THE DANCE BETWEEN NEW AND OLD MAKES FOR A WEIRDLY PROVISIONAL DYNAMIC

"WHATEVER HAPPENS, WE HAVE TO MAKE IT WORK'

How to move forward after the death of a friend, and of a band? New Order recall making *Movement*, their first steps towards a new kind of greatness "If we'd never taken those first steps we wouldn't have had success," Bernard Sumner tells **STEPHEN DALTON**. "So, ultimately, I believe we were right."

LEON MORRIS/HULTON ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES

In a lonely place: Reluctant frontman Bernard Sumner steps forward, 1981



"Three unsure men and a tape machine": A pre-Gillian New Order play Hurrah in New York, September 26, 1980

LOOKING back nearly 40 years, Bernard Sumner is weighing up his complex feelings towards New Order's difficult early days. "When we first started New Order it was both a burden and a blessing," he explains. "People were interested in us because obviously we *were* Joy Division, but it was a burden in that we couldn't *be* Joy Division. We had to reinvent everything, but we're not rock chameleons like David Bowie or Madonna. We didn't have a clue, really."

It is early November 2018 and Sumner is in London, along with bandmates Stephen Morris and Gillian Gilbert, preparing to play a sell-out show at Alexandra Palace. It is the band's only UK date of 2018, a welcome opportunity to check in with the home crowd before they embark on a South American stadium tour. This London show crowns one of the strongest and most poignant comebacks in recent memory; a rebirth that began in 2011 and produced the band's first album of new studio material for 10 years, 2015's *Music Complete*.

It has, of course, been a long and often bumpy journey for New Order. And while they have come a long way – geographically, spiritually, emotionally – from messy beginnings in scuzzy Manchester rehearsal rooms, they remain hemmed in by memories and ghosts. Ironically, for such unsentimental, forward-thinking modernists, their past is never that far away. As much as for their brilliant music, New Order are simultaneously defined by the strange vicissitudes of their own history – from the premature deaths of Ian Curtis, producer Martin Hannett, manager Rob Gretton and label boss Tony Wilson, through the rise and fall of Factory Records and the Haçienda, to their recent bitter rift with former bassist Peter Hook.

Once again, though, their past is about to edge a little closer. New Order begin a reissue programme in March with *Movement – The Definitive Edition*, a boxset devoted to their 1981 debut album. Meanwhile, Jon Savage's oral history of Joy Division, *This Searing Light, The Sun And Everything Else*, also arrives in March, just a few months before the 40th anniversary of the band's *Unknown Pleasures* album. Such weird logistical clashes only further highlight the band's first, faltering steps as bereaved young men struggling with the truncated career of Joy Division and much longer afterlife, without Curtis, as New Order.

> "YOU STICK TOGETHER WHEN YOU'VE SOME SAD LOSS LIKE THAT; IT WAS LIKE A FAMILY"
> GILLIAN GILBERT

"Was it therapeutic for them to continue? Probably, yeah," says keyboard player Gillian Gilbert. "You stick together when you've some sad loss like that; it was like a family."

"One of the things I think people liked about New Order in the early days was the shambolic, couldn't-give-a-fuckness about it," says drummer Stephen Morris. "We didn't know what the fuck we were doing. So we just got pissed and hoped nobody would notice."

"I like a challenge," explains Bernard Sumner. "Give me something difficult to do, if you give me enough time, I'll be able to do it. Most people would learn to sing, get a bit of experience and then make a record. But I made a record first, as a singer. It wasn't really the right way to do it. We had to go through that painful experience to come out on the other side. In the end, there was no right way to do it." He pauses. "The thing about now," he continues, "is we are in a good place. So you don't really hark back to the bad old days."

Perspectives shift over time, of course, but powerful emotional undercurrents remain. Hook left New Order in 2007, but continues to honour their historic works with his new band, The Light. He remains hugely fond of their debut album, *Movement*: "To me, the beauty of *Movement* is the synchronicity between the three instruments: the six-string bass, the guitar, the drums. When it worked, it was magic. It was all about the three of us clicking in together."

Perhaps inevitably, Sumner takes a different view as he recalls that strange, liminal period when Joy Division became New Order and three friends found some deep, unarticulated solace in the music they

EBET ROBERTS/GETTY IMAGES

made together. "Our attitude was, 'Whatever happens, we have to make it work,'" he says. "Because it's the only thing we've got.'"

PEOPLE often speak of Joy Division in terms of the urban fabric of Manchester itself; how the ambience of a crumbling 19th-century industrial city seeped into their stark, intense music. Later, when New Order were in full flight, they somehow captured the more colourful optimism of Manchester during the 1980s, the city reinvigorated and regenerated. At the dawn of that decade, though, few parts of the city were as insalubrious as the streets around Pinky's nightclub, next to Broughton Baths, where New Order rented their first rehearsal space. Stephen Morris cheerily describes it as a "step down" from their previous rehearsal room, TJ Davidson's on Little Peter Street – a former industrial warehouse where, to avoid rats rumoured to inhabit the toilet, Sumner admits "we used to piss through a hole in the floor". The space at Pinky's not only had an even bigger hole and actual rats, it also had a collapsing ceiling. "It was a shithole," Morris admits. Hook recalls it more fondly, as "a freezing-cold pit with a dangerous hole in the floor".

It was here, on June 16, 1980, that Sumner, Hook and Morris met to discuss their future – or, at the very least, to see if they had one. This was less than a month since Ian Curtis had taken his own life, May 18, the day before Joy Division were due to leave for their first American tour. "I remember Stephen went to the funeral and decided to carry on," says Gilbert, "which was all a bit weird, really, because everybody was so upset, Tony and Rob and all the band. It was just like, 'What are we going to do?'"

Bereavement can bring a range of emotions and physical reactions that may be unfamiliar, frightening and uncontrollable. It is likely all three surviving members of Joy Division experienced moments of crisis following Curtis's death, but rather than pause to mourn the departed, they took advice from the living. "Rob particularly thought that if you didn't keep this fucking boat sailing, it might sink," Hook recalls. "And Tony was happy to join in with him on that because he loved our music. I don't think anybody wanted us to sink, they just wanted us to carry on."

Encouraged by Gretton and Wilson, the surviving trio set to work, guided by something more elusive and complex than merely carrying on. Hook wrote one song, "Dreams Never End", just hours after the singer's wake. On another composition, "Truth", Sumner clearly channels Curtis in his vocal cadences and lyrical tone. Meanwhile, two of the final Joy Division songs, "Ceremony" and "In A Lonely Place", were absorbed into the trio's repertoire. The tapes of Curtis singing were so muffled that Sumner had to guess the lyrics, even after running them through a graphic equaliser.

Even if their music was still anchored in the past, a shaky rebirth required a new band name. Morris recalls a long afternoon spent in the Dover Castle pub near Pinky's, where Gretton proposed dozens of potential names from his notebooks, mostly borrowed from terrorist groups and revolutionary movements: Shining Path, Black September, The Immortals, Man Ray, Theatre Of Cruelty, Year Zero, Arab Legion were all options. More exotic contenders included The Witch Doctors Of Zimbabwe and The Sunshine Valley Dance Band.

"Steve used to be in a group called The Sunshine Valley Dance Band," Sumner laughs. "It was him and two old blokes... same as it is now."

Gretton and Morris lobbied hard for The Witch Doctors Of Zimbabwe, prompting Sumner and Hook to threaten to quit. They ultimately got their first choice – New Order, a name taken from a Guardian article about the emerging post-war regime in Kampuchea. "We chose New Order because we thought it sounded neutral," Sumner explains. "It was nothing to do with fucking Hitler," he sighs, for the millionth time.

A NEW start was required, certainly. But for those crucial early months, Joy Division's past inevitably kept intruding into New Order's present. In July 1980, Factory released Joy Division's final studio album, *Closer*. Meanwhile, just weeks after Curtis's funeral, the band briefly considered recruiting a new singer.

Sumner admits he found this a fraught process. "Everything you did felt weird," he nods. "Playing the songs felt weird, rehearsing without Ian felt weird, going in with other artists felt weird."

Both Kevin Hewick and Crispy Ambulance singer Alan Hempsall later claimed they were potential candidates to replace Curtis, but Hook disputes this. Whatever discussions may have taken place, the band soon decided nobody could replace Curtis without risking negative comparisons. Instead, they held internal auditions, with Gretton and Hannett as referees. "Rob made us sing in the practice place, which was awful," Hook recalls. "I've got those tapes of us singing dead loud, with the backing track quiet, so he could hear it, like an audition tape. My God, it's excruciating."

Hannett was withering about New Order's early vocal efforts. "His line was, 'You're all shit,'" says Hook. Sumner later emerged as lead vocalist and lyricist, but only after several difficult, agonising months. Mark Reeder, a longtime friend of New Order who became Factory's representative in Berlin, says Sumner effectively had no choice. "Bernard was simply the best one at singing and was therefore thrust into the role of frontman, which at first he detested," he explains. "I guess he felt a bit unworthy being forced to step into Ian's shoes. I remember him once showing me some freshly penned lyrics he'd written, but he said he was too ashamed to sing them. He thought they were too daft."

Sumner's ability to play resourcefully the cards he was dealt proved critical in what happened next. "At the start we had everyone pooling in and writing lyrics, but we ended up with some Frankenstein-type lyrics and it just didn't work," he says. "I couldn't put any feeling into them. So after a bit I just started doing it on my own."

On July 30, a twist of fate gave New Order their first opportunity to test these embryonic songs live. The Beach Club was an arty film-and-music night held above Oozits, a gay club in Newgate Street, Shudehill, just north of Manchester city centre. When Factory Benelux signings The Names pulled out of playing, New Order stepped in, archly billing themselves as The No Names.

"It was a big secret," recalls Terry Mason, who spent decades as tour manager for both Joy Division and New Order. "The crew was only told the week of the gig. In keeping with a lot of Joy Division gigs, the place was a shithole. Correction, it was a tiny shithole up some very tight stairs."

Former Buzzcocks manager Richard Boon was part of the collective behind this short-lived precursor to the Haçienda: "The upstairs room was dark, with little stage lighting, and my abiding memory is of a roomful of silhouettes and a tentative emergent synth-based sound, faltering then flowing. I turned to Pete Shelley and remarked, 'Someone's been listening to their Popol Vuh soundtracks for Werner Herzog.'"

The No Names played a short set of half-formed New Order tracks, with all three members alternating on vocals. "We did 'In A Lonely Place', 'Ceremony', 'Dreams Never End', 'Truth', I think, and maybe one more," Morris recalls. "There was a long jam while I tried to get the tape recorder working. That was a fucking bad idea. For some reason we recorded the drum machine onto tape. Why we didn't just use the drum machine I don't know. I remember two girls at the front saying, 'This lot are just ripping off Joy Division...'"

"It was a pretty cool happening," adds Sumner. "There was no stage, you were on the same level. There were a lot of tall people there, for some strange reason, so lots of people were looking down on us. But I remember it being an OK gig. That was a glimmer of hope."

"I'm sure that there will be people in Manchester who claim to have been there and will dine out on their stories about how wondrous it was," recalls Mason. "I was definitely there and it was three unsure young men and a tape machine, and the start of an ongoing ordeal."

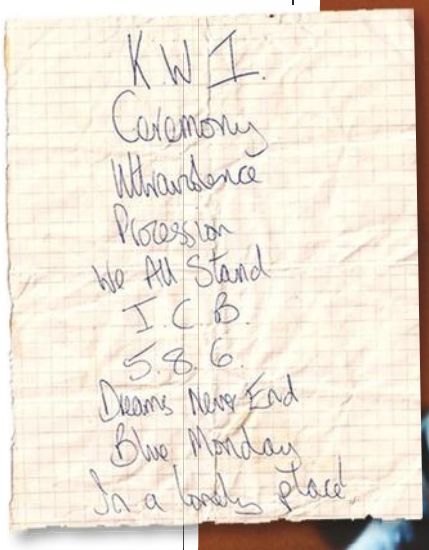
"We were pretty tight," Hook insists. "We were scared to fucking death, absolutely terrified. It was just terrifying to come back, and it was

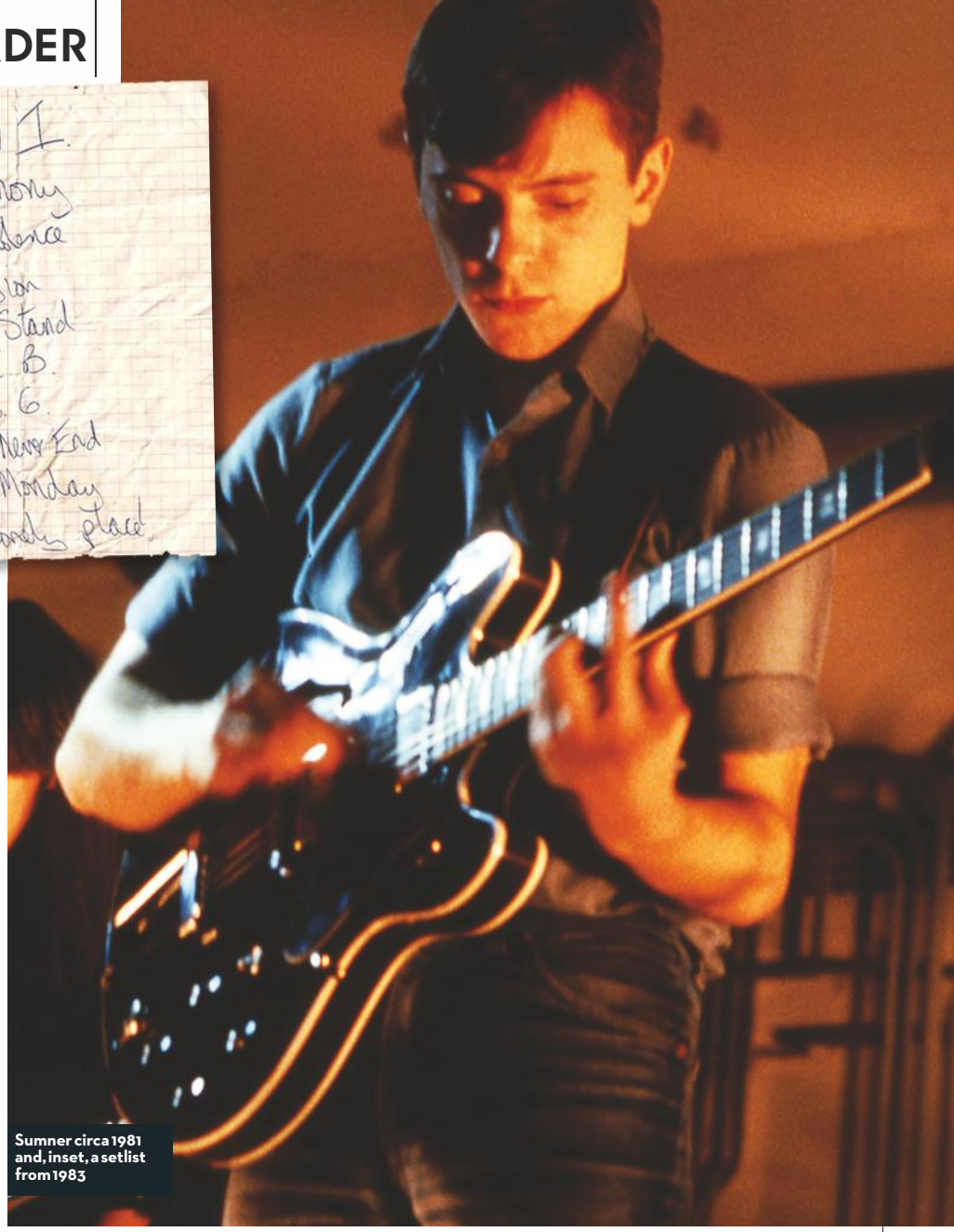
"There was a glimmer of hope": Bernard Sumner, 1981

PETER ANDERSON

pretty soon, wasn't it? Ian had died on May 18, so for us to write seven or eight songs, get vocals finished on them, and get ready to play was pretty hot. That's a lot to do in two months. We didn't play one Joy Division song."

"Rob came up with this brilliant idealistic concept that we shouldn't play any Joy Division songs," Sumner says. "We all agreed, I don't know why. It was virtually commercial suicide. It was a kind of idealistic thread that ran through everything we did. And most of the idealism, I have to say, came from Rob or Tony. Personally, I just wanted an easy life. Ha! But for some reason we agreed and we didn't play Joy Division songs. It seemed very high and noble, but obviously that made things much more difficult for us."





Sumner circa 1981 and, inset, a setlist from 1983

WHEN New Order tour today, they assemble first at a facility they own in Cheshire – gear storage, practice rooms, strong cups of tea – to blow out the cobwebs. It is a far more comfortable way of doing business than the raw, tentative work done at Pinky's over the summer of 1980. In early September, after a short run of low-key live dates, the band made a trip to Sheffield for a recording session with friends and ex-labelmates Cabaret Voltaire. Later that month, they flew to New York for the first time – a kind of consolation prize for the cancelled Joy Division tour in May. Familiar faces were on hand to greet them: both Wilson and Hannett were also in the city, recording A Certain Ratio's second album *To Each*...

"On our arrival in New York, Tony set about drawing a map of Manhattan, warning us of the dangers," recalls Mason. "We were staying at the Iroquois Hotel on 44th Street, and in 1980, Times Square and 42nd Street were not the Disneyland that they are today. In order to look tough, Bernard promptly gave himself an anchor tattoo in biro!"

Coincidentally, The Clash were also staying at the Iroquois. A north-south rivalry quickly developed between the two bands, exchanging verbal insults and fighting over the hotel's free bar snacks. Inevitably, escape to America also brought fresh disaster for New Order. Just hours after their first American show, at Maxwell's in Hoboken, New Jersey, on September 20, the rental van loaded with all their gear was stolen from outside the Iroquois. The band blamed their road crew, who had neglected to disable the van by removing the distributor cap.

"Someone stole the van with all the fucking equipment in," Sumner nods. "I remember me, Peter and Rob were sharing one room, like the Three Bears. There was a knock on the door in the morning and Tony came in laughing. He said, 'It's wonderful, darlings! It's the perfect ending! You couldn't have scripted it better...'"

New Order had to postpone shows and buy new gear, losing thousands of pounds in the process. The NYC police initially seemed indifferent to the robbery, although they did eventually recover the van, almost empty. "The only thing they couldn't take was Pink Floyd's transformer," Morris laughs. "We needed a transformer to convert our British gear to US power. We only had a bass amp and a guitar amp. So our wonderful roadie Terry hires Pink Floyd's transformer for doing their stadium gigs, it was fucking huge! They couldn't lift it out of the van, so they left it."

Despite these setbacks, New Order found America liberating and inspiring. During their stay they recorded an early version of their debut single, the retooled Joy Division track "Ceremony", with Hannett producing. Meanwhile, tour organiser Ruth Polsky generously introduced them to the city's many hedonistic delights.

"We were just lads, on holiday, going fucking mental and dragging anybody down with us," Hook laughs. "Because we could! And the more puritanical you were, shall we say, the more we dragged you down... We were boys on the piss."

Critically, Polsky also introduced the band to fabled Manhattan clubs like Danceteria and the Paradise Garage. The idea for the Haçienda, and for the band's later electronic adventures, was partly born during these visits.

"We saw these wonderful clubs," Hook recalls, "Rob thought that he could create that kind of groovy club for ourselves, because the clubs in Manchester weren't groovy."

New Order's initial American shows were still works in progress, brief and chaotic. "I think they regarded us as experimental avant-garde new wave," Sumner deadpans. "Which it was, in a way. Unintentionally. I just think we were in the right place, at the right time, with the right face."

"At that time in America, any band from England was a big thing," Morris says. "It was the second British invasion or whatever. You would get people coming to see you because you were English."

One witness to these early shows was Factory's sleeve designer, Peter Saville. "I remember the unbearable tensions beforehand and Bernard going on stage drunk," he told *Uncut*. "The most touching thing I ever saw was in New York, when they'd just become New Order. They did 'In A Lonely Place', which is so fucking disturbing with lines like '*How I wish you were here with me now*'. As they finished with the singing, the arrangements on stage slipped back to when they were Joy Division. Hooky moved to the right, Bernard dropped back to the left and they left a space. It was weird, almost instinctive. I'm not sure they were even aware of it, but it seemed to make sense somehow."

PICTORIAL PRESS LTD / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

IF New Order were a different kind of band, we'd maybe be talking in hushed terms about how they dutifully chose to soldier on as a trio, despite the glaring absence of Curtis, remaining sensitive and reverential custodians of Joy Division's legacy. But they had new sounds to explore, bold choices that required pragmatic solutions. To that end, Gillian Gilbert was invited to join in October, an extra pair of hands as Sumner struggled to balance vocals, guitar and keyboards.

"They knew I could play guitar, basics, but I hadn't a clue about keyboards," Gilbert says. "It was a different world because I'd been to an all-girls' school, I'd done graphics at Stockport, and just being plonked in a band that you admired was... it was all very new. So I borrowed my sister's little Bontempi organ and learnt 'Truth', and then I went into rehearsals with them in Cheetham Hill. It was a different world."

Prior to New Order, Gilbert had played a single show with her teenage punk band The Inadequates, and briefly guested on guitar for Joy Division in December 1979 at Eric's in Liverpool after Sumner injured his hand. According to Hook, though, she was party chosen because she did not threaten New Order's existing power balance. "Gillian was so inexperienced, she just did what you told her to do," Hook says. "We were still a bunch of dirty bastards, japing, shagging, drinking, whatever. We didn't make any allowances for her."

Although Hook has lately downplayed her creative role in the band, Gilbert remembers feeling welcomed into a partnership of equals.

"It was all a learning curve for me," she says. "I mean, Peter Hook's said a lot of things about me, but he never said anything when I was there. Everybody got on great."

On October 25, the four-piece New Order made their live debut at The Squat on Devas Street, close to Manchester University. Billed as special guests of The Durutti Column, they played seven songs. Gilbert recalls it as an exciting baptism. "I was terrified, but excited to be doing something," she nods. "Hooky used to say, 'Don't worry if you make a mistake, just look as if you mean it.' Which was a good bit of advice, really.

"I think they were the best gigs, where something breaks down or something weird happens."

Gilbert's arrival helped New Order expand their increasingly electronic sound palette. Joy Division had already embraced synthesisers on their *Closer* album with their primitive monophonic Powertran Transcendent 2000, built by Sumner from a kit. As New Order, they began acquiring more gear, including polyphonic synths, primitive drum machines and early sequencers. The latter, especially, would prove crucial to their future.

Much of New Order's early electronic gear was either built or customised by Sumner with help from a "proper boffin" called Martin Usher, who they met through Hannett. "Martin lived in a big house in Whalley Range," Sumner recalls. "He had a lodger downstairs who happened to be a Hells Angel, who would drive his motorbike down a ramp into the basement. We asked him if he wanted any money as payment and he said, 'No no, I don't want any money but Jack the Hells Angel downstairs is very keen on LSD and I don't know where you get it from. Could you get some LSD and then we'll call it quits...?'"

Drum machines, sequencers and synths first began to reshape New Order's sound on *Movement*-era tracks like "Truth", "Hurt" and "Everything's Gone Green". But recreating these songs live on temperamental analogue equipment proved troublesome, especially as Gretton insisted the band never use backing tapes.

"Rob had this idealistic thing that we had to recreate everything live," Sumner explains. "So we took the gear out live that wasn't designed to go out live, and had some terrible moments with it breaking down. A lot of that early stuff was made with perhaps three synthesisers, and in some cases we modified them so they could do things they weren't suppose to do. But we got every last drop out of those machines, and I'm still of that persuasion today."

> **"WE DIDN'T PLAY ANY JOY DIVISION SONGS. IT SEEMED VERY HIGH AND NOBLE BUT IT MADE THINGS MORE DIFFICULT"**
> BERNARD SUMNER

TO cement Gilbert's arrival, New Order's expanded four-piece configuration recorded a sleeker new version of "Ceremony", released as their debut single in March 1981. The winter brought more live gigs, their first John Peel radio session, and final preparations for recording their debut album. But before *Movement* came unfinished business. In February, the band briefly returned to Pink Floyd's Britannia Row studios in London to add final overdubs to "The Kill" and "The Only Mistake" for Joy Division's posthumous double album, *Still*.

Hook recalls "a weird, out-of-body experience" playing along to a disembodied Ian Curtis. "We didn't do many overdubs, because really nobody was into it. But Rob's big thing was, 'Let's finish it off and then we can put it all away.'"

Still in a fragile psychological state, New Order returned to Strawberry Studios in Stockport – where Joy Division had recorded *Unknown Pleasures* – in March.

Martin Hannett's deepening drug addiction, grief over Curtis, and undisguised contempt for the talents of the surviving members crushed their fragile morale. Recording "Procession", the snappy synth-driven track that became the band's second single, Hannett forced Sumner to record more than 40 vocal takes.

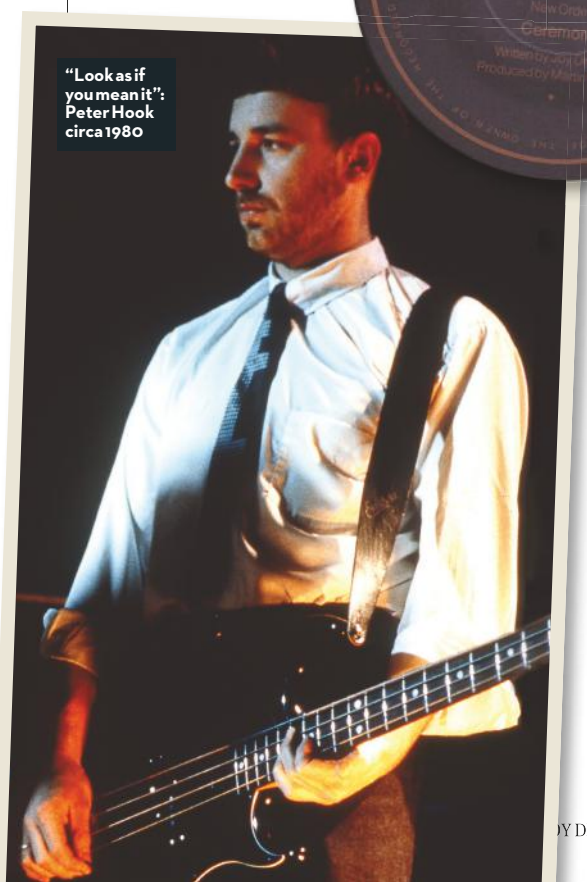
"He was bombastic, he was bitter, he was antagonistic," Hook says. "He kept saying to us, 'Get on with it! You're shit! Fucking get out of my way! I wish you'd have died with Ian...'"

"Martin was very odd," Morris nods. "You sometimes got the feeling that he didn't think we should be doing it at all."

"He just didn't seem to think it was going to work, which wasn't a good vibe to have in the studio," Sumner shrugs.

One freezing night, the events of the last year finally caught up with the band. "We all broke down in tears," Hook recalls. "We were recording during the night at Martin's insistence – and it's actually quite alienating working through the night when everybody else is in bed, especially in those days. It was a weird situation, we were all really fucked up about Ian, and Martin's attitude was hateful. Considering that he was much older than us – he was 30-odd, we were 24 – he should have known better."

In late April, New Order relocated to Marcus Music studios in west London to finish *Movement*. Hannett was now in "full-on arsehole mode", according to Hook. He demanded a gram of cocaine before he would even start work, and spent much of the sessions locked away in the tape store cupboard with a small audio speaker hooked up by engineer Chris Nagle, insisting he would only come out if he heard anything worth his attention.



"Look as if you mean it": Peter Hook circa 1980

PICTORIAL PRESS LTD / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

"We were getting paid £1.50 a day and he was demanding a £50 gram of coke before he'd start work," Hook fumes. "And then keeping us up all night because he was off his tits... Just fucking outrageous behaviour."

Adding to the tension, London itself was on edge after the Brixton riots earlier that month. "It was really weird because there was loads of fighting on the streets," Gilbert remembers. "It was such a change coming from Manchester."

"We scared the living daylights out of the receptionist," says Sumner. "We'd just been for a sandwich, and they'd locked the studio doors. We started banging on the doors and they were saying, 'It's the rioters! It's the rioters!' She was very freaked out."

Although Hook sang lead vocal on two tracks, "Dreams Never End" and "Doubts Even Here", Sumner had solidified his position as frontman by the time *Movement* was recorded. "To be honest, Bernard singing worked out well," admits Hook. "It enabled me and Steve to play together, him to sing then the keyboards and the guitar coming in after the vocal; it gave you the perfect framework for New Order. That formula became just as important as Joy Division's."

The work carried out between April 24 and May 4 captures a band in transition; the songs on *Movement* gesture obliquely towards New Order's electronic future but are still beholden to the austerer, cavernous atmospheres of Joy Division.

While the percussive disco-noir of "Senses" might have slotted comfortably into *Closer*, its descending synthesiser coda could almost be a rough sketch for "Blue Monday". In this blurry phase, where one band ends and another begins, it is possible to view *Movement* as both Joy Division's third album as much as it is New Order's first.

During the sessions, the spectral presence of Curtis continued to manifest in some unexpected ways. According to Joy Division folklore, the stern "ICB" was titled after a tasteless acronym for "Ian Curtis Buried". Not quite true, as Hook explains.

"It was actually the name of the ferry company that took our gear over to America when it was all stolen," he says. "We came back with very little, but what we did come back with had ICB stickers on it, I went, 'Oh look: ICB, Ian Curtis Buried...' To be honest with you, losing Ian and losing the gear was pretty much a complete burial of everything to do with Joy Division."

> "LOSING IAN AND LOSING THE GEAR WAS LIKE A COMPLETE BURIAL OF EVERYTHING TO DO WITH JOY DIVISION"
> PETER HOOK

Tellingly, both Hook and Sumner adopt a familiar deep croon on *Movement*, a lonely baritone adrift in a strange, unsettling sonic landscape.

"We were all imitating Ian's vocals," admits Hook. "Steve wrote the most vocals. He came in early with a few songs finished, then we all worked together, changed words and stuff like that.

"Steve was very good – he got discouraged as he is easily discouraged, so he stopped. By the time we got to *Power, Corruption & Lies* he'd stopped writing any vocals."

"It was all I knew," Sumner shrugs. "We thought what Ian did was good, and I wanted to be good as well. We had to start somewhere, and it seemed better to start with something. There was lot of self-doubt as well. 'Is what we're doing any good?'

"Personally, I didn't want it to sound like sub-Joy Division, I didn't want to sound like sub-Ian. It did feel a little bit like that. But I didn't really know any better because... well, we were Joy Division, but without the singer."

To Hannett, New Order were emphatically not Joy Division, a band he once scathingly described as "one genius and three Manchester United supporters." While an increasingly assertive Sumner and Hook kept pushing for more "physical punk energy" in the studio mixes, Hannett persisted with his more cerebral, avant-rock textures.

Eventually, towards the end of recording *Movement*, band and producer had one final, irreconcilable fallout – over "Everything's Gone Green", an early milestone in the band's emerging arsenal of pulsing, mechanoid anthems. Peter Hook recalls this as a revolutionary "fuck you" moment in New Order's evolution. The workers had seized the means of production.

"We wrote 'Everything's Gone Green' towards the end of *Movement*," says Gilbert. "But we didn't put it on the record, because at that time we were completely fed up with Martin. So we said, 'Let's go in and produce ourselves.'"

"We had a different sound in our heads, especially when we first started using synthesisers," Sumner explains. "That sound culminated in 'Blue Monday' – we would never have got that with Martin.

"The ultimate moment of friction really was on 'Everything's Gone Green'. We were mixing the 12-inch at Marcus and we said we wanted more drums, more drive. He said, 'Fuck off, you can do it!' and just walked out."

"We sat there with Chris Nagle, who said, 'You don't know what you're fucking doing!' And we didn't. But by the time we got to 'Blue Monday' we did know what we were doing. If we'd never taken those first steps we wouldn't have had that success. So, ultimately, I believe we were right."

SOON after completing *Movement*, New Order embarked on a European tour. In Brussels, the band reunited with an old friend, Annik Honoré, Factory Benelux co-founder, who promoted their show at l'Ancienne Belgique on May 15. After the gig, Mark Reeder recalls a lively night out with Echo And The Bunnymen at the glitzy Mirano club."Bernard was on his best mischievous behaviour," Reeder says. "After about six Pernod and oranges, he exercised his VIP privilege, went up onto the closed-off balcony and took a piss... down onto the people dancing on the dancefloor. Time to leave."

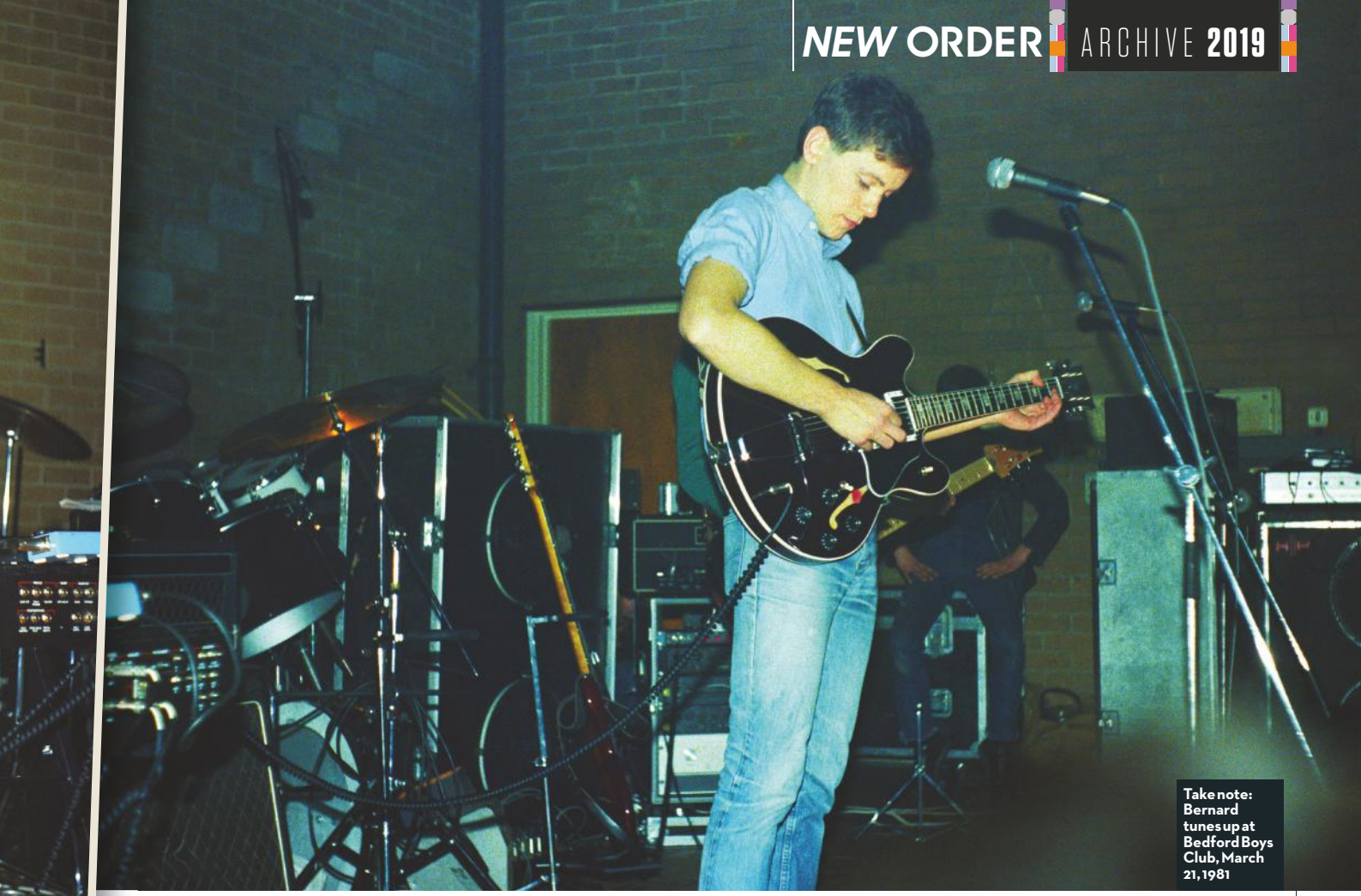
With no encores and no Joy Division songs, New Order's short sets often provoked extreme reactions. In Hamburg, for instance, a gang of right-wing skinheads showered the stage with bottles and invaded the band's dressing room. In Stockholm, Hook drove the band's Transit van into the back of the promoter's car, shunting it through a red traffic light. The promoter turned out to be Britt Ekland's brother.

"The European dates were fun," recalls Terry Mason. "We were using 10cc's PA system and crew. They didn't know what to make of us. They couldn't get their heads around 35-minute sets, tiny band stage requirements; we were the new big name in Manchester and they couldn't understand how or why."

Still nervous about his new responsibilities as frontman, Sumner was drinking excessively before each performance. On June 20, when New Order played Glastonbury festival for the first time, he fell over on stage. "He never did it when he was in Joy Division," notes Hook. "He never got drunk before he went on, he was never pissed and obnoxious, throwing things at the audience, screaming, shouting. If I'm honest, we asked him for too much, too soon."

When the band resumed touring in September 1981, they had a game-changing new song in

"I hadn't a clue about keyboards": Gillian Gilbert learning fast, Bedford Boys Club, March 21, 1981



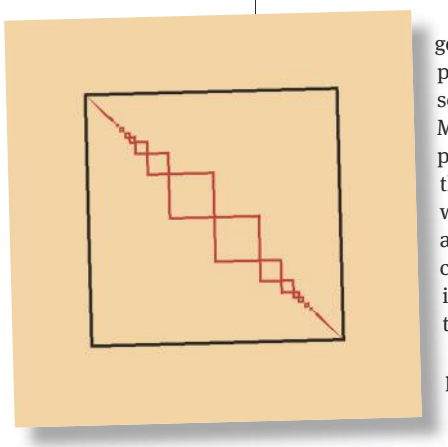
Take note: Bernard tunes up at Bedford Boys Club, March 21, 1981

their set. Built around a vivid robotic earworm from a pulse sequencer, "Temptation" was New Order's first full-blooded dancefloor anthem; a benchmark marriage of human and machine. The song can be counted alongside "Everything's Gone Green", "Procession", "Hurt" and "Prime 586" as part of a remarkable series of early works that signposted New Order's revolutionary new direction.

A modernist manifesto crammed into seven gleaming minutes, "Temptation" was New Order's first self-produced single, and became their first Top 30 hit in May 1982. It remains their most played live song today.

Crucially, "Temptation" also feels like a weight lifting with its euphoric lightness of spirit and surprisingly sweet-natured lyrics: "*I never met anyone quite like you before*". If *Movement* offered a path from one band to the next, then once New Order were finally – fully – New Order, they could embrace their future in earnest.

"It's always been about the future," Sumner says. "Without that attitude I wouldn't be here today, and we wouldn't have come up with tunes like 'Blue Monday' or 'Bizarre Love Triangle' or 'Temptation' or 'Everything's Gone Green'. Right from the early days of Joy Division, I always had a nagging thought in the back of my head: wouldn't it be fabulous if you could move music forward?"



IT is approaching evening in London and Sumner, Morris and Gilbert are considering the lasting impact that *Movement* has had on New Order's career. "*Movement* is like *Ralf And Florian*, the album that Kraftwerk made," says Sumner. "It doesn't really sound like Kraftwerk, it's the first few faltering steps getting to Kraftwerk. I guess *Movement* is that in relation to New Order."

"I loved *Movement*, when it was finished," Gilbert smiles. "I think it now gets a bit of bad press from the rest of the band."

New Order were on tour in America when the album was finally released in the UK on November 19, 1981. It stalled at Number 30 in the charts. By cruel contrast, *Still* – Joy Division's posthumous double album of offcuts and live tracks – reached No 5 just weeks before. "*Movement* was an awkward album," says Terry Mason. "It was an exorcism, a rite of passage, a naming of the dead.

"My reaction was similar to the band, that once the new album was done, you would never listen to it. There was more interest in what was next."

Mark Reeder has a more generous take on the album, praising the avant-garde sound palette and Stephen Morris's strong percussive presence. "The band recorded the last few songs they had written with Ian on *Movement* and then they closed that chapter," he says. "I think it is a wonderful homage to the departed."

Movement was a rites-of-passage album, with all the awkward adolescent psychodrama that implies. A throwing off of oppressive parental authority; a first tentative shift from monochrome to colour, a settling of accounts. But it also contains some prescient pointers to New Order's imperial phase, a small but significant step towards "Blue Monday" and an unassailable run of '80s albums, from the rugged brutalism of *Power, Corruption & Lies* to the glorious melancholia of *Technique*.

Almost 40 years later, *Movement* still radiates the clumsy, inarticulate, hopeful, painfully self-conscious intensity of youth. Inescapably grounded in tragedy, it is not quite the end of the tunnel, but it reaches out towards the light ahead.

From their current heights of comfortable middle age, do New Order miss anything about the *Movement* period? The punk anarchy, the scuzzy hotels, the explosively erratic live shows...?

"Fuck no!" laughs Peter Hook. "We had no lifestyle, we were absolutely skint. But I suppose in an odd way you do miss it, because then you were doing it for love, you were doing it for passion. You never knew what was going to happen, whether it was going to be a success or not. It was all about this mad, almost primeval drive to do what you were doing."

"It was amazing that we survived, really," Sumner concludes. "I was a pretty crap singer at the time. It was fucking total chaos live. I was more interested in getting drunk and off it than doing gigs. And we didn't have any money.

"But somehow it worked. Maybe because we seemed different from all the other career-opportunity bands who were just interested in fame and fortune. Then, of course, we got better..."

ANDREW TURNER / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

NEW ORDER

POWER, CORRUPTION & LIES

New Order's *real* debut album! Exit Martin Hannett, enter pop perfection and "Blue Monday". | *By* **MICHAEL BONNER**

AT what point did New Order become New Order? Was it on July 9, 1980 – when the remaining members of Joy Division entered Cabaret Voltaire's Western Works studio in Sheffield for their earliest recording session? Or was it when New Order released their debut single, "Ceremony", in January 1981; the first time the name appeared above the door, as it were? But the truth is a little harder to pin down: New Order became New Order incrementally.

Although *Movement* – released in November 1981, just 18 months after Ian Curtis' death – looked cautiously towards the future, it still owed much to Joy Division. Only the propulsive closing track "Denial" hinted at the band's glorious pop-dance rebirth a few months later. In April 1982, New Order released their first recording made without long-serving producer Martin Hannett – "Temptation", a bright, breezy single that established the band's emotional temperature. The following month, the Haçienda opened for business – and New Order started in earnest making music that might conceivably fill it. They began with "Blue Monday", released in March, 1983; a 12in-only release that imbued the wintry soundscape of *Movement* with nightclub rhythms and synth-pop grandeur. In Peter Hook's New Order memoir, *Substance*, the bassist cites Sylvester's "You Make Me Feel (Mighty Real)", Kraftwerk's "Uranium" and Klein + MBO's "Dirty Talk" among various key influences. "A few people didn't initially like 'Blue Monday'... and I guess we lost a few fans over it," wrote Bernard Sumner in his autobiography, *Chapter And Verse*. "A bit like when Bob Dylan went electric." Splendidly, neither "Temptation" nor "Blue Monday" appeared on the album that followed on May 2, 1983: *Power, Corruption & Lies*.

CRITICS' VERDICTS

"This is not the consistent masterpiece we've been waiting for; if anything, it is more patchy even than *Movement*. But it has its moments, and they are moments when time stands still."
MARK BRENNAN, MM, MAY 7, 1983

"This makes no pretentious claims for itself, nor does it labour after an impression of profundity. New Order are just getting on with it: simply, efficiently and enjoyably."
PAUL DU NOYER, NME, MAY 7, 1983

In its way, *Power, Corruption & Lies* was just as much a transitional record as its predecessor. While *Movement* suggested that the Joy Division chemistry had survived but had also changed, *Power, Corruption & Lies* saw New Order finding their feet, finding their sound and moving forward. The album arrived in the shops in typically enigmatic fashion. There was no band name, band photos or even song titles on Peter Saville's record sleeve – it featured instead a still life by the 19th-century French artist Henri Fantin-Latour depicting a basket of roses against a dark background, embellished by Saville with a colour code imprinted down the right-hand side. The album title reportedly came from graffiti spray-painted by Gerard Richter on the exterior of Cologne's Kunsthalle two years earlier; in *Substance*, though, Hook claims he took the title from a *Daily Telegraph* quote printed on his paperback copy of George Orwell's *1984*.

While the sleeve artwork for *Power, Corruption & Lies* broadly fitted into a reassuringly familiar aesthetic – cryptic, unsettling, austere – the music on the album itself was less immediately recognisable. Here was a band attempting to reconcile the old Joy Division/New Order with the creative possibilities opened up by "Temptation" and "Blue Monday". There are playful bursts of giddy pop – as well as more foreboding moments, stark monochrome flashes illuminating great expanses of bass and drums and, perhaps, one final tussle to shake off the lingering ghost of Ian Curtis.

POWER, Corruption & Lies opens with "Age Of Consent": another landmark moment for New Order. Carried along by the bright drama of Gillian Gilbert's

TRACK MARKS

1. Age Of Consent ★★★★★
2. We All Stand ★★★
3. The Village ★★★★
4. 586 ★★★★
5. Your Silent Face ★★★★★
6. Ultraviolence ★★★
7. Ecstasy ★★★
8. Leave Me Alone ★★★★★

Label: Factory
Produced by: New Order
Recorded at: Britannia Row
Personnel: Bernard Sumner (vocals, guitars, melodica, synthesisers, programming), Peter Hook (bass, electronic percussion, synthesisers, programming), Stephen Morris (drums, synthesisers, programming) and Gillian Gilbert (guitars, synthesisers, programming)
Highest chart position: UK 4; US –

keyboards, Stephen Morris' giddy percussion, Hook's liquid bassline and Sumner's gorgeously full and melodic guitar lines, it is the band's glossiest, most uninhibited song thus far. But even in the thick of the song's sugar rush, Sumner can be heard asking *"Please let me go"*, or repeating *"I've lost you"* at the song's close; at moments like these, it's hard not to think of Curtis. The late singer hovers over the mournful "We All Stand", too: Sumner sings ominously of *"the end of the road, where all futures go"* while spidery guitar lines weave in and out of Hooky's supple basslines and we hear brief echoes of the ARP Omni string synth lines from "Decades". After "Age Of Consent" set the bar so very high, "We All Stand" feels slightly jarring, like an offcut from *Closer* parachuted in to assuage any more loyal fans from hurling accusations of "Judas!" at New Order. There is a far smoother transition from "Age Of Consent" to "The Village", whose bubbling synth lines and rackety guitar lines recall "Temptation". *"New life turns towards you,"* sings Sumner. Well, quite.

"586" started life as one of the band's earliest forays into electronic music – "Video 586" (also known as "Prime 586"), was created at the request of Tony Wilson, who wanted some incidental music to mark the opening of the Haçienda. "Video 586" is the ur-text for *Power, Corruption & Lies*-era New Order: elements of the track appear on "Temptation", "586", "Blue Monday" and "Ultraviolence". The version on *Power, Corruption & Lies*, meanwhile, cleaves closest to "Blue Monday"; the tight, electro pulses and repetitive grooves seem thrillingly hypnotic.

New Order eventually succumb entirely to their electronic influences on "Your Silent Face", which owes a great debt to Kraftwerk's "Europe Endless" (an early version was simply titled "KW1"). Against a backdrop of glacial synths, melodica lines and shimmering basslines, Sumner dreams of a transcendent future-state: *"no hearing or breathing, no movements, no colours, just silence"*. Deciding to undercut all this lofty business, Sumner adds a gruff: *"You caught me at a bad time, so why don't you piss off."*

"Ultraviolence", meanwhile, loops back to the sequencers and melodies of "586", but the other elements – Stephen Morris' tribal drumming, Sumner's scratchy guitar lines and Hook's itchy bass – feel closer to post-punk. Sumner's closing line, *"Time to go"*, feels once again an exhortation to Curtis' spirit. The instrumental track, "Ecstasy", on the other hand, throws forward to the sonic dramas on *Low-life* – particularly tightly-woven songs like "The Perfect Kiss" and "Sunrise".

"Leave Me Alone" provides a bookend to the joy of "Age Of Consent" on *Power, Corruption & Lies*. *"Take me away everyone/When it hurts thou,"* pleads Sumner gently, his voice never sounding smaller than here. It's a fragile song, supported by beautiful but achingly sad guitar and bass-lines. New Order moved swiftly on – deeper into electronics with Arthur Baker in New York, then back to the guitar-driven antics of *Low-life*. They would write pop songs again – and sad songs, too. But *Power, Corruption & Lies* offers a perfect balance of pop, rock and electronica, between human warmth and mechanised melancholia.

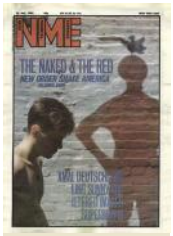
THIS RECORD SAW NEW ORDER FINDING THEIR FEET, FINDING THEIR SOUND AND MOVING FORWARD

"PREACHING TO THE CONVERTED ISN'T ANY FUN"

PICTORIAL PRESS LTD / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

On a US tour NEW ORDER come out of their shell. Sensitive? The band are like Brits on holiday: playing pranks, fake encores and shows of riot-inducing brevity, and riling the "nutcases who buy our records". "The other night a kid came backstage after the gig and asked us to sign an LP," Bernard Sumner tells **CHRIS BOHN**. "Hooky told him to shove it up his arse."

Another day at the office: New Order, circa 1983



NME 23/7/83

SOME People try to pick up girls and get called assholes. This never happened to Pablo Picasso. Not in New York.

Visitors to The Funhouse, a Puerto Rican club on 26th Street between 10th and 11th, would do well to heed Jonathan Richman's advice.

Pablo's Spanish is the loving tongue here, but really it is physique that talks big with the locals.

Bohn enters through the hideously mocking grin of the giant Joker mask that forms one of its doorways, stumbles through the carny bric-a-brac, feeling like the circus geek, and tries his strength on the test-your-punch ball in the club's amusement arcade.

He gives it the best he's got, yet it barely registers wimp. Fortunately nobody's looking. So while his luck's holding he passes on the arm wrestling machine and slips back into the crowd. He is hardly less conspicuous among the Puerto Ricans, whose gleaming muscles bulge through T-shirts cut off directly below the chest and shorts slashed at the groin.

"If you're English you don't stand a chance," Simon Topping — ex of A Certain Ratio and presently in NYC studying timbales — has already informed his Mancunian colleagues in New Order. "Ask a girl to dance, they hear your accent, look you over and laugh in your face!"

Anyway, dancing in The Funhouse is largely a solitary pleasure. The most company people ask for is their own reflection in one of the hall's many mirrors. The sound system is more than enough to keep them occupied. The DJ spins fabulously disjointed funk tracks. The nuttier the breaks the better the dancers like them, responding to each echoed rlmshot with delighted jerks, throwing their heads back and squealing their heels across the floor to stuttering sequencers.

It is a matter of pride to the dancers that they stay abreast of the mercurial changes. The Funhouse is where Planet Rocker Arthur Baker comes to test his latest mixes. "He reckons if he can get through to these meatheads he must be onto a winner," goes the local logic. These early hours he's onto his sixth version of New Order's "Confusion" which, when he's finally satisfied with the audience response to it, will be their next Factory US 12".

As it plays, the three boys and one girl of New Order mingle with the crowd unnoticed, checking the reaction for themselves. It is enthusiastic, as indeed it should be. "Confusion" is the result of an extraordinary collaboration bringing together the opposing temperaments represented by New Order's methodical pursuit of excellence and Baker's poltergeist spirit. Though it began as an uneasy experiment, New Order rose to the challenge of working at speeds and in conditions unknown to them.

"It's the only time we ever sat down to write," recalls bassist Peter Hook with a shudder. "And God, was it hard! Arthur Baker just stood there staring at us, sort of going, go on go on, write something, and we were walking around in circles thinking, fucking hell, isn't it time to go home yet? We don't normally work well under pressure."

"He'd start a drum machine off and send one of us in saying, 'have a go on that synthesiser,'" expands guitarist Bernard Albrecht, né Dicken. "See what you can come up with. So you're standing there thinking, what the fucking hell am I doing? You'd do something and he'd go, that's alright, turn off the drum machine, start the tape rolling and say, right play it again. And even though there'd be a minute's worth of mistakes in it, he'd just say, fuck it. It's alright.

"The one thing he doesn't like about English records, he told us, is they're too neat and clean. And I agree."

It is not out of vanity that New Order are listening to themselves in a New York club at 4.30am. Having just played the final date of a gruelling American tour in Trenton, New Jersey a few hours earlier, they would rather be back at their hotel celebrating the fact with some sleep.

But even at this hour duty calls. They must film the video for "Confusion" before returning to Britain, specially as Charles Sturridge, whose previous credits include *Brideshead Revisited*, has been flown out to make it. Don't let it be said that Factory don't do things in style. (Sturridge was brought in, incidentally, on the instigation of Factory's Tony Wilson. They met at Granada TV, where Tony holds down a day job and for whom Sturridge completed *Brideshead*.)

At the point of filming, the group still weren't sure of the storyline outside the fact that a Puerto Rican dancer fitted into it somewhere. Echoes of *Fame*? Not unless it's at New Order's price...

THE rock of America is riddled with bores. It has become such a commonplace activity that talking music here is about as exciting as discussing the weather.

Bohn would be the last person to bring it up, but at every stopping point on his odyssey down Broadway to the Paradise Garage, where New Order are playing their NY concert, he is earholed by a weevil wiv' an anecdote.

The hotel bellhop recalls every blow struck at a Talking Heads concert; a soda jerk gets frothy about all the new English bubblegum groups he's had the pleasure of serving; a cab driver hands him a thesis on how Ritchie Blackmore revolutionised America.

If in Britain forming a group is — as Julien Temple has said — about as rebellious as joining the army, in America being into rock is on a par with being in the civil service. Being into rock is being part of a non-productive, non-reactive glorified fan club there to service the needs of an idol elite.

Anyone tenuously linked with rock — and that can mean as little as having the right haircut and an English accent — has the sort of credit rating that will earn him a free cup of coffee at Bleecker Bob's Greenwich Village record store, so long as he's prepared to put up with the world's loudest and oldest juvenile shooting off his latest Weltanschauung.

The clubs provide some sort of refuge from all this mundanity partly because the music is too loud to talk over, but mostly because the clubs themselves are so gaudy and great, and the music they play so expertly functional and supremely anonymous that people gratefully use them — the clubs and the music — and move on. Unlike those people who've immersed themselves in the rockpool, they're not overcome with the need to talk about it all the time.

Tonight, however, is not a typical one for the Paradise Garage. Normally a gay black disco, it has been leased at great expense to New Order for the concert. Few of the regulars are evident in the audience, even though the same group is responsible for a stateside — indeed worldwide — club hit in "Blue Monday".

The slyest, most perfect, driest and most sexual of dance records, "Blue Monday" is a model of anonymous functionalism, the work of a group who assert quality above novel identity.

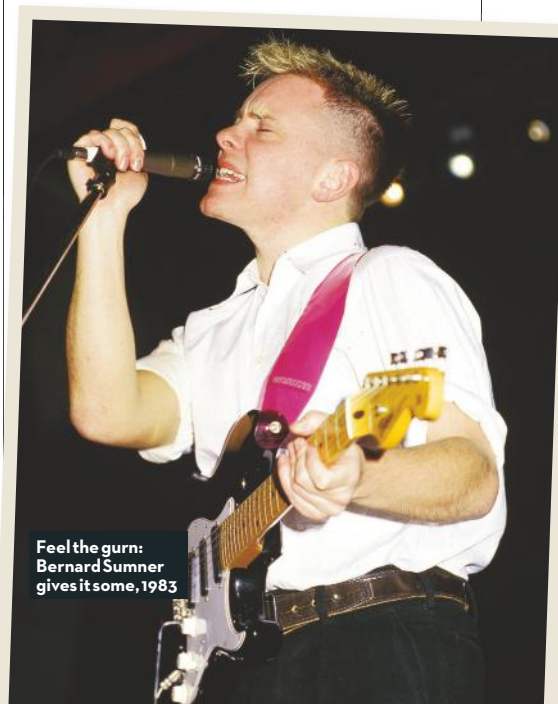
And you can't believe how refreshing that is until you've heard any one of a stream of British hits screaming "love me, love me, love me!" from every Anglophile store, radio station or club.

Nevertheless, despite themselves, New Order's concert draws an audience in awe of the group's name and reputation, based on the impressions they got from reading the British music press. They are at once given a lot to live up to and even more to live down...

"What people write about us is usually five miles wrong!" mutters Bernard ruefully.

"All these Americans know all the stuff, but all they do is stare," says Peter Hook at once flattered, frustrated and flabbergasted by their American experience.

"It's really weird. The first half dozen gigs before we got to New York we went down pretty well — a bit too well. It was like they were just waiting for us, we didn't have to win them over or anything. We'd already won. All we had to do was play. They were all shouting 'Dreams Never End'! 'Ceremony'



Feel the gurn: Bernard Sumner gives it some, 1983

KERSTIN RODGERS/REDFERN

"We'd already won": New Order in New York, July 1983

— just like they do in Britain. At least we've had some lively over the top audiences there, but here the only lively audience we've had was in Austin, Texas. Otherwise we haven't had to struggle, meaning there's no point to doing it really.

"Preaching to the converted isn't any fun is it?"

That's as maybe, but it doesn't take long before American audiences become slightly unsettled by what they're seeing.

Brought up on the New Order mystique as fostered by the British music press, their reverence is duly shattered by the group's offhand and nonchalant stage manner, the long pauses between songs and maybe even the summery sight of Bernard Albrecht in grey shorts, looking like nothing if not a devilish choirboy. Once the music starts sinking in, it is obvious, too, that this isn't the same group who made the heavy emotional demands of their first LP *Movement* and their early singles.

It is as if they've digested the darkness and rigour that informed those great, albeit gloomy records and no longer feel the need to bludgeon people with their seriousness. That period still informs the present New Order, but in the interim they've become lighter, freer and extraordinarily playful; which isn't to say they're any the less affecting, just that they now touch a broader spectrum of feeling and experience.

New Order have become a truly fearless group, one that refuses to be intimidated either by their peers' trends or the desires of the audience. They will take you — if you're prepared to let yourself go — from the swollen heartbleed of "In A Lonely Place", through the impishly turbulent "Temptation" and slamdance of "Confusion" and onto the entirely different joyous plane of most of *Power, Corruption And Lies*.

Within the framework of one song — such as "Your Silent Face" — they'll couple the banal and comic with moments of true beauty. The song is hooked into a stunningly simple and subliminal sequencer pattern that serves as both rhythm and melody; it is topped with a ridiculously insipid OMD-type synth tune, which would have spoiled it, had it not been rescued by Bernard's gently spiralling ocarina. The words follow a similar trajectory — one moment reflective, the next hilarious. Could you imagine the old New Order so carefully drawing the listener into a tissue thin web of sensitivity only to abruptly eject him with the kiss off lines: "*The sign that leads the way/The path you cannot take/You caught me at a bad time... So why don't you piss off!*"?

> "I TRIED WRITING SERIOUS LYRICS AND I WAS SHIT AT IT. SO I JUST WROTE DOWN WHATEVER I FELT LIKE"
> BERNARD SUMNER

If any song marks the lucid New Order, it is that one. Where the early records were written under the shadow of Joy Division the songs from "Temptation" onwards feel looser, more natural.

"Well when we first started, I tried writing serious lyrics and I was just shit at it," remarks Bernard candidly. "So for the second LP I just wrote down whatever I felt like. I didn't really care whether the lyrics were good or bad on the second one so I was more relaxed.

"On the first one I felt so self conscious because I was coming after Ian, who was such a great writer. I wanted the lyrics I wrote to be good. They were alright, but they were not wonderful. After I'd said 'fuck it' I started to enjoy writing a lot more. Ironically, the songs on the second LP mean a lot more to me. And because they're less self-conscious, they're more truthful to myself.

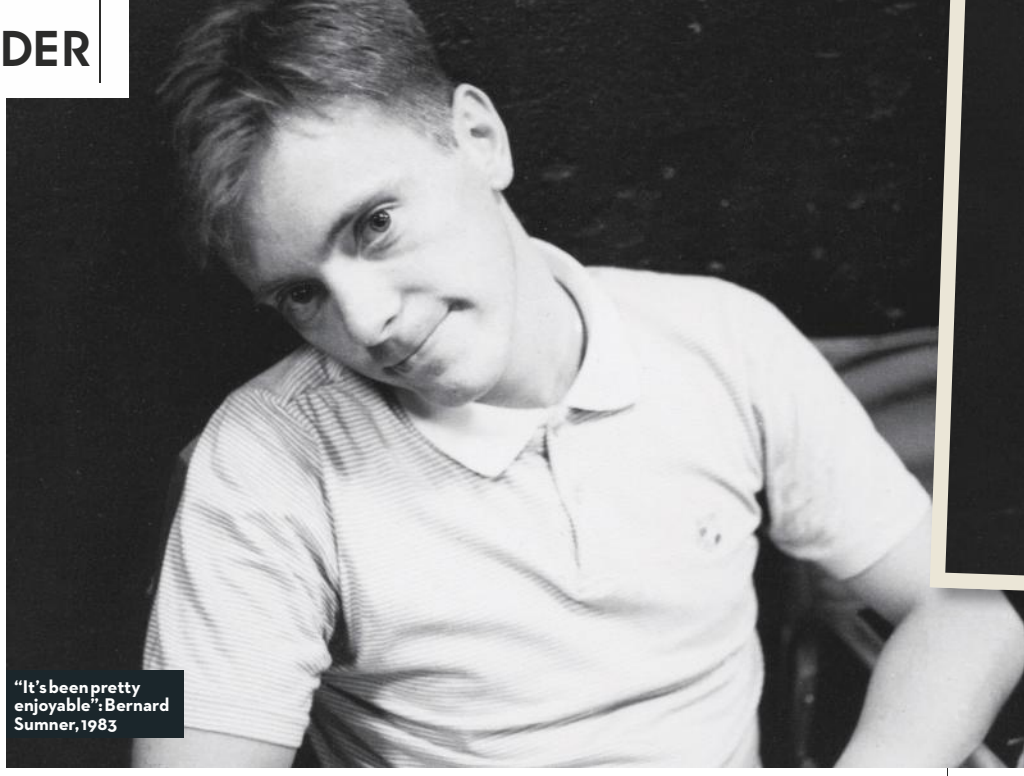
"With 'Your Silent Face', well we wrote that one in the studio. Because we wrote this very beautiful emotional music, we thought to put a beautiful very emotional vocal line over the top was a bit obvious. So we put down a quite nice vocal line and some nice lyrics, but by the end we got stuck for a couple of lines.

"Everyone was thinking of really beautiful, poetic, meaningless lyrics. Then I thought, instead of having something beautiful, poetic and meaningless, we might as well have something dumb, idiotic, coarse and meaningless. An absolute contrast to the rest. Even roses have thorns..."

THE foundations of America's rock, based on a fake bonhomie, Boy Howdy beer and cheesy McDonald's grins, are easily undermined.

The New Order Way of doing things makes them quake a little, not because it's calculated to, but because their genuinely casual approach, often at odds with the highly disciplined music they're playing, constantly disrupts the mood of the night. Some interpret their laconic,

KEVIN CUMMINS/GETTY IMAGES)



"It's been pretty enjoyable": Bernard Sumner, 1983

uncommunicative stage demeanour as arrogance. Others think it's funny. A worldwide complaint seems to be that their sets — at around 45 minutes — are too short.

"Usually we're not contracted to play a specific time, so we come over here and play a set which we think is long enough, but not so long that we get bored," explains Peter Hook. "But everybody seems to think it is too short, I don't know whether that's a compliment or not!

"We play 45-50 minutes because it feels right to us. We almost caused a riot in Rotterdam once. The promoter gave out notices warning that this band only plays 45 minutes, so if you don't like it don't come in!

"That we don't play encores is another big beef with people. Once, just as an experiment, we played seven numbers, went off, came back on and played three more. We played our usual ten numbers, but because everyone thought we'd done an encore they weren't bothered!"

Not everybody's so easily pleased, as Bernard recalls with a smile.

"One kid in Sheffield a couple of years back said, 'you didn't play such and such a song tonight and you only played for 45 minutes. You've shattered all my dreams. Give me my money back!' Fucking hell, I almost bottled the bastard! And he said, me three other mates would like their money back as well!

"I dunno," he expands, "we shouldn't really categorise people I suppose, but I know the type. We have the studious type with glasses and a fringe and we have the nasty little men with chips on their shoulder type who do that sort of thing. And the kind of people who've just read about you and expect you to be exactly what they've read."

"There's a lot of nutcases who buy our records I can tell ya," says drummer Stephen Morris, "who come backstage after a gig. You know: 'why didn't your play any Joy Division songs? Why did Ian Curtis kill himself?' Some get really worked up about it."

"Or they come in and tell you, you're a load of rubbish, you are," chips in synth operator and second guitarist Gillian Gilbert. "Imagine! It's like if you were in a pub and somebody said, you're a load of rubbish you! You'd flippin' hit them round the ear'ole. But you're supposed to just sit there..."

"Or go, oh yeah, you're right," mocks Steve. "Soddin' hell. Fucking hell, I should give it up now."

Later Bernard tells Bohn the biggest mistake people make about them: "Thinking we're serious. Because we're serious about the music they think we take everything seriously. Like, the other night a kid came backstage after the gig and asked us to sign an LP. Hooky told him to shove it up his arse. We were only joking, but because it's us he took it serious and went away hurt.

"I dunno," he sighs. "They take everything you say so seriously, as if you mean everything..."

Bernard breezes in to the breakfast room of the Holiday Inn, tired yet affable as always. He takes a long sigh, "fooKINell!" byway of morning greeting and proceeds in his quiet spoken Lancashire burr of a voice and with a gleam in his soft eyes to relate various anecdotes and pranks that have occurred during the tour.

The most unlikely concerned a 65-year-old stringer for a German teen magazine based in LA. He wanted the group pictured in Mickey Mouse ears! Surprisingly, only Bernard refused.

"Then I made the mistake of sitting in the pram we use to push around the video equipment," he laughs, "and while I was jammed there he rammed the ears on me head and took the photo!"

Another night the group's highly unconventional manager Rob Gretton tempted the lighting man with 100 dollars to join New Order onstage and sing for one number.

"He stood there with the lyrics to 'Cries And Whispers' shivering like crazy. You could hardly hear him!"

> "THEY WANTED SOMEONE WITHOUT ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THE GUITAR WHATSOEVER"
> GILLIAN GILBERT

The best and cruellest prank, however, took place at London Brixton and involved Joy Division biographer Mark Johnson, an American who dogs New Order's every move. At their recent Ace concert, they got the number of his 'bike announced over the PA, saying it was blocking an entry. When he rushed out to move it, he saw New Order's roadie van hurtling up the road with his 'bike lashed to the top.

And there you were thinking that The Stranglers were the bad boys of British pop.

PERHAPS before New Order depart NYC for Washington DC, we should brief the President about the group. New Order are the phoenix who rose from the ashes of Joy Division, from Manchester, who were the last popular group from Britain to probe heart and soul with stark candour. They never attempted anything so conceited or deceitful as writing anthems for doomed youth, but the rigorous explorations of self, as personified by vocalist Ian Curtis's words, were uncannily right for the moment.

After Ian killed himself and Joy Division as such no longer existed, popular music took fright and for the large part regressed into its present state of mercantile infantilism, as if nobody wanted to take the risk of running so deep again. Thus phun became the dictate of the day, a pervasive cynicism gnawed away at any ideals that survived punk — to an extent a necessary stage in pop's sweet growth — and business acumen became the ruling aesthetic.

The greyly unimaginative post punk indie boom wasn't particularly encouraging to the independent cause; and because the media is only capable of operating in terms of epic sweeps, they swept out the imaginative and inspired along with the rest.

The three surviving members of Joy Division, meanwhile, auditioned a new singer but, finding no one suitable, brought in untutored musician Gillian Gilbert — Steve Morris's friend — and renamed themselves New Order.

How about an introduction to yourself, Gillian? She is, incidentally, an attractively down to earth and funny Mancunian who has the sort of accent that explains John Cooper Clarke's popularity.

"I vaguely knew Joy Division," she whispers. "I used to rehearse next door to them in Manchester when I was in a punk group, just before their hit. I used to go and see them and then I got to know Stephen — I sat next to his sister in geography, which is a coincidence really. I think it was one night at Liverpool Eric's and Ian had hurt his hand on a bottle or something, so he couldn't play the guitar for one number. It wasn't a very big bit, so as I could play guitar a bit, I played that one number.

"Then, some months later the others called me. I think they wanted someone without any knowledge of guitar whatsoever to remind them of when they started and couldn't play. I think they were also looking for somebody who didn't have any particular style, so they could work them better into the band."

"We didn't really want anybody who could play," Stephen concurs. "If we got someone who could he might not fit in with the way we write

LISA HAUN/MICHAEL OCHS ARCHIVES/GETTY IMAGES

"I don't think we're that important: Peter Hook, 1983

songs and stuff, so we decided the best thing to do was get someone in fresh. Gillian was the only person we knew who couldn't play. We'd seen her play before and she definitely couldn't!"

They spent a year writing and rehearsing a completely new set, retaining only two unrecorded Joy Division songs — "Ceremony" and "In a Lonely Place" — which they released as their first single.

Anticipating the intense media interest focused on their return, they sensibly avoided its glare. With admirable perseverance they stuck to their own way. Being a sensitive collective beast, the media took New Order's unwillingness to cooperate personally and thus had them and Factory — the Mancunian independent they'd allied themselves to — figured as hostile, sullen and uncommunicative.

The lack of exposure hasn't harmed them any. Through a series of infrequent international tours and the odd date at home, they've become the best selling independent group in the world, racking up club and radio hits in Australia, New Zealand, Japan, Europe and America.

That they've done it their way — that is, with a minimum of fuss and the emphasis on quality, not personality — is something they quietly cherish. Even if it has meant odd interpretations of the New Order silence.

"I just don't think the group should be at the forefront," asserts Peter with some authority. "I don't think we're that important. If we've got something to say, we say it. If we haven't got anything to say it doesn't mean we're dumb. It just means we don't fancy shouting our mouths off, or something like that. But I consider the music very important because it affects me, so I don't see why it shouldn't affect other people as well. I find it exhilarating, depressing, happy, sad or whatever. I just don't think our personalities need to be pushed."

The seeds of their mistrust of the media were sown when they were still Joy Division.

"In the very early days before *Unknown Pleasures* the music press detested us and that was a kind of driving force to go on," says Bernard. "When *Unknown Pleasures* came out we were suddenly wonderful. We went from being the most unpopular group in the world to the most popular. Fucking ridiculous!

"I remember reading one live review of a gig at the Moonlight Club. We played three nights there and got wonderful reviews from all of them, even though one night we were shit, really bad. And the review from that night said 'this group was so good they made me want to piss in the face of God'! And we were fucking appalling! When I read that I just thought the whole press thing with Joy Division had gone completely over the top."

Shy and conscious of their own privacy, they stopped doing interviews three years ago. Most importantly they didn't want to get sucked into the music industry mainstream.

Says Bernard: "We were worried in case once you started you would begin to do things the way everybody else does and that would have been boring. So to keep our noses clean... It's been pretty enjoyable the way we got where we are today. It's been really good the way we've done it because we've not gone through the system and I, for one, feel better for it. I don't mean because I've done things honestly. I mean, each to his own."

From the distance they've so admirably maintained from the pop maelstrom, its absurd manifestations must appear ridiculous. From the other side, the constancy of New Order and its Factory allies might be mistaken as old fashioned or slow-witted.

"I think this idea of being hip or not being hip is a fucking load of shit," Bernard forcefully states. "It's a trap that music has got into. If you see the progress of music as a maze, well now it has arrived at a dead end. The idea of hip has stopped people expressing themselves as much as they should do, because they're afraid of not being hip. Like, you can only be hip if you've got this rhythm or these instruments, otherwise people will stop listening to you!

"I think it's terrible because it's stopped people producing music unselfconsciously. They're too conscious of whether what they're doing will fit into the mould or not. Hip is making a lot of people very narrow minded. Hip is like a chain reaction. A music paper gets very narrow minded in its approach, the people who read it get that way and eventually it works its way into music. Then everything starts going in one direction. The music scene in England now doesn't allow for any kind of fringe to be successful."

The Ontario cinema, located in one of Washington's black districts, specialises in lurid Spanish pictures. But tonight they're featuring New Order. That is, if they arrive.

Bohn and the photographer travelled down from New York in the relative splendour of an Amtrak train, passing through the Baltimore of Diner, Philadephia and across the Delaware. Shortly before Wilmington the train pulls up outside a plant called Destruction Of Confidential Records. Bohn ponders whether he should throw in his notebook, but decides that no guilty secrets are contained therein.

So much of what New Order says is good sense and the way they've ploughed their money back into Manchester by way of The Haçienda club is exemplary. Their attitude ought to serve as a strong example in these times when popstars would sell their soul for a line — preferably on a mirror but otherwise in a teenzine. Not to mention the nobility of their art; he is pleased to publish it.

The group travel down by air shuttle, arriving at Dulles ("'sDullesfuck!" sneers Simon Topping, who is guesting with the opening act Quando Quango) Airport. Half an hour before the show is due to begin Steve Morris, Peter Hook and manager Rob Gretton are still missing. Quando Quango, also a Factory act, are sent out to appease the restless audience with their stylishly aloof and bemused funk.

It works fine, but the four songs they've brought with them don't last long. In the meantime the three have arrived "ratarsed pissed" on melon ball cocktails. Hooky immediately falls asleep under a dressing room table and later melts into the night.

He's still playing hooky when the group, already hours late, must go on. They start without him and try to pass off Rob Gretton as the Third Man, but even from the back it is obvious that this figure in drooping tracksuit vest and shorts flailing away at the cymbals, often as not missing them, is not the right man.

Midway through the second song, Hooky shows. "Ah, the black sheep returns," mutters Bernard, while shooting Hooky a rueful glance. Hooky straps on his bass, looks out into the audience and apologises: "Hi shitheads!"

A new order: being pissed means never having to say you're sorry.

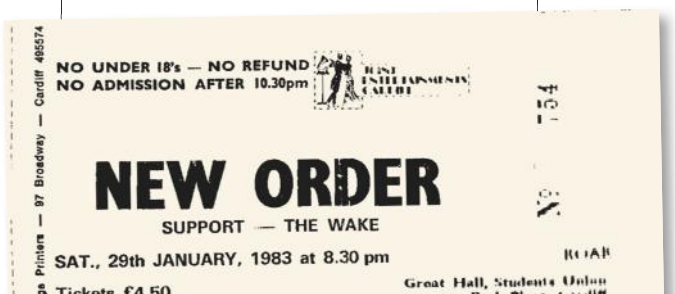
To compensate a new, healthy Hooky arrives first in Trenton, New Jersey. Hardly a prestigious finale to the tour, it is a godforsaken, rundown place, the equivalent of a northern milltown after the mills have closed down. The venue is once again in the black quarter.

Next door, parents are holding a carnival to raise money for the baseball Little League. It is here New Order go for a photo session, gathering in front of something called The Hellhole.

What's on the other side?

"A vision of what's to come for them's that misbehave," pronounces the ticket collector.

Duly warned, New Order stop squabbling over who should wear the funny glasses and line up for their portraits. Bergmanesque visions of the grim reaper no longer hover behind the music of New Order. Cries and whispers have transmuted into smiles on a summer night. New Order have struggled with the Meaning Of Life and come out winning.



NEW ORDER

LOW-LIFE

Let the games begin! New Order come to life in a flurry of hedonism, exuberance and self-love. | *By* **DAVID QUANTICK**

"*YOUR hair was long, your eyes was blue/Guess what I'm going to do to you!*" sings Bernard Sumner ungrammatically but enthusiastically on "Face Up", the closing track on New Order's 1985 album *Low-life*. It's a lyric which, amongst other things, suggests that the days of Joy Division are long gone: and indeed *Low-life* is probably the first New Order album to really shake off the band's earlier incarnation. Where its predecessors still had moments of sadness and introspection, *Low-life* – while hardly a party album in the style of Bad Manners or Mrs Mills – is full of vigour, excitement and even naughtiness. Despite its possibly PiL-referencing name, *Low-life* is short on low and long on life.

And it's great. From the insane, industrial'n'western opener "Love Vigilantes" to the knickers-off-ready-when-I-come-home finale that is "Face Up", *Low-life* is New Order enjoying life, liberty and the pursuit of sex and drugs, if not rock'n'roll. With lessons learned from "Everything's Gone Green", "Blue Monday", MTV, the New York dance scene and its close friend drugs, New Order had regained the confidence they'd lost after Ian Curtis's death and become the first transatlantic stars of what someone somewhere once named "dance rock" and got away with it.

Low-life is great, and it's also the first New Order album to sound like an album, rather than a collection of disconnected songs. With its crisp black-and-white cover – band photos! – and its crisp black-and-white production, *Low-life* is an entirely coherent set of songs. There are no half-finished drum machine experiments or Joy Division rewrites and – another first – there are no singles left off the album to frustrate people who want all the good songs in one place. *Low-life* is the first New Order album to contain two singles – "The Perfect Kiss", released the same day as the LP, and "Sub-culture", remixed and released in October that year.

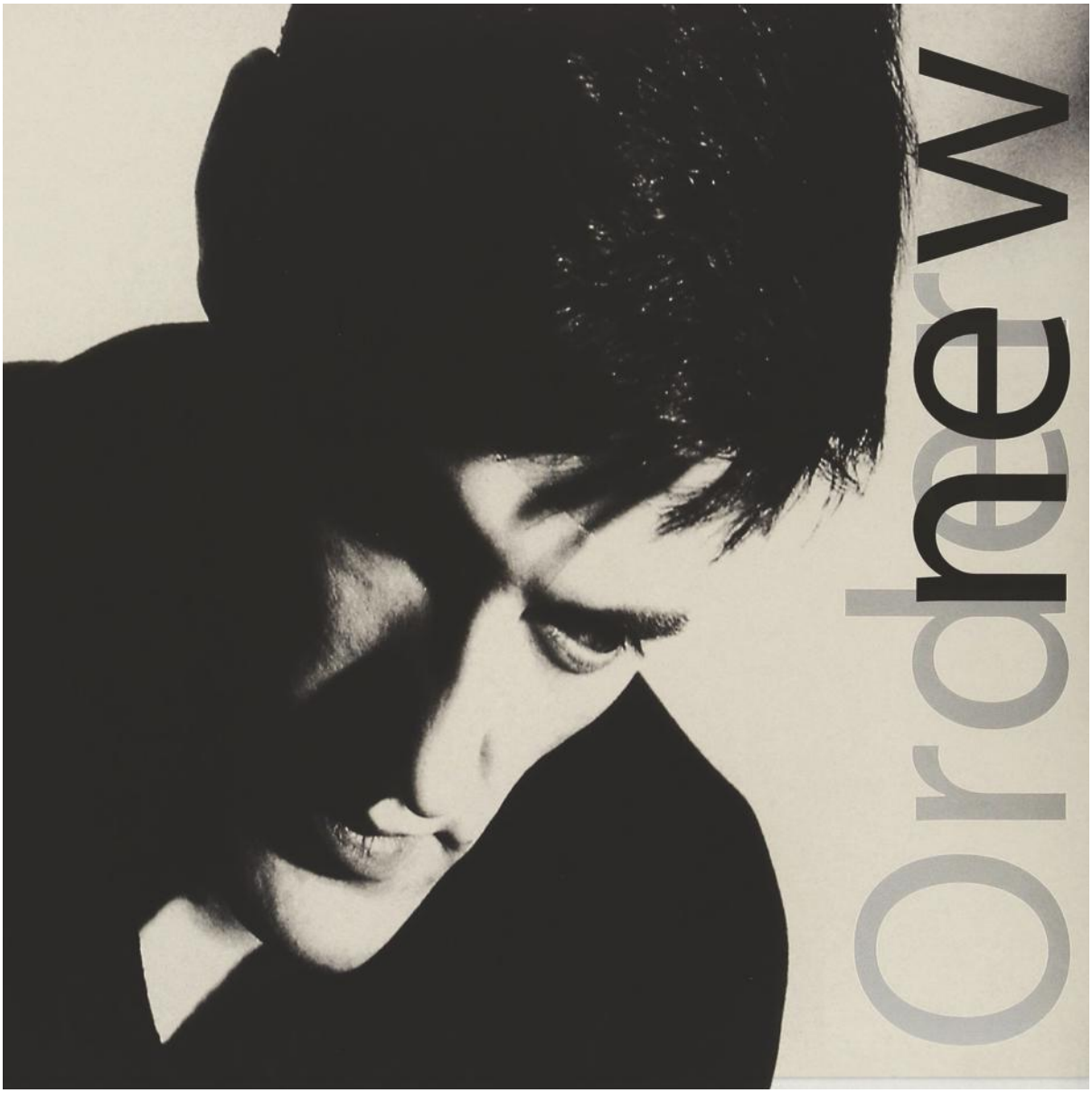
Mostly, it's New Order doing the thing they do best, which is being a band where all four members work together without occupying each other's space. This happened with Joy Division, where Morris's drums, Hook's bass and Sumner's guitar all worked around one another and Ian Curtis's voice: and it happens here in a changed dynamic with Gillian Gilbert's keyboards. New Order never sounded so confident and so meshed as they do on *Low-life* (something that's immediately apparent from the Jonathan Demme video for "Perfect Kiss", where the band show us a work of genius they made earlier without apparently breaking sweat).

The songs reference a wide range of topics (probably: not even Barney professes to know what they're all about) with a particular emphasis on Percy Filth. As well as "Face Up"'s somewhat startling exhortations, there's "Sub-culture"'s "*One of these days when you sit by yourself/You'll realise*

CRITICS' VERDICTS

"Those one-string sentimentalisms still stir the senses, those explosive dynamics still jolt complacency, that disco blast still sounds cheap yet thumps home, those lyrics still sting like a slap... It's all so minimal, it's mountainous." STEVE SUTHERLAND, MELODY MAKER, MAY 18, 1985

"*Low-life* is New Order's *Closer*." RICHARD COOK, NME, MAY 18, 1985



TRACK MARKS

1. Love Vigilantes ★★★★
2. The Perfect Kiss ★★★★★
3. This Time Of Night ★★★
4. Sunrise ★★★★
5. Elegia ★★★★
6. Sooner Than You Think ★★★
7. Sub-culture ★★★★
8. Face Up ★★★

Label: Factory
Produced by: New Order
Engineered by: Michael Johnson
Recorded at: Jam and Britannia Row, London
Highest chart position: UK 7; US 94

you can't shaft without someone else," as well as "Perfect Kiss"' slightly more reflective *"Tonight I should have stayed at home/Playing with my pleasure zone."* Clearly someone was enjoying, if not other people, then themselves.

In general, Bernard Sumner's lyrics are more open than before: long gone are the sub-Curtis mumbles, replaced by a new confidence. From the bizarre – *"Hello everyone it's nice to be here/I've come so far to see you all,"* he sings on "Sooner Than You Think", for all the world like a Music Hall entertainer – to the classically blunt – *"I've known you from the start I know your wooden heart,"* sings Barney on "This Time Of Night", referencing Elvis long before "Regret". Sumner's lyrics are full of zest and ebullience.

Best of all has to be "Love Vigilantes", a song about a soldier returning home to a wife who thinks him dead and who is probably dead herself. Sounding like a folk song set to a Joy Division riff, "Love Vigilantes" not only inspired The Cure's "In Between Days", but was also covered by several actual folk artists, most notably Oysterband and Iron & Wine. It's a great song, and would have made a brilliant double A-side with New Order's later cover of Jimmy Cliff's "Vietnam".

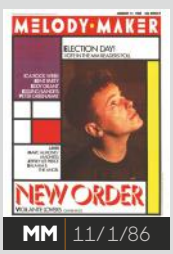
The rest of the album has its highs and lows, but the lows are pretty great and the highs are ridiculously high, the most mountainous being "The Perfect Kiss", which as well as being a brilliant song, with New Order at their most team-like, is also Peter Hook's finest moment. Hooky runs the song like a ringmaster, whipping it through eight minutes (on the extended album bonus disc) of incredible playing, from the skronking elephant funk of the intro to the bass runs at the end which on the right night can take the listener's breath away – most notably, tape-counter fans, at 6.48 on the longer versions, where Hook's bass literally causes the song to take off, literally fly around the solar system and literally bomb the actual Moon (I saw New Order play the song at a benefit concert in a small venue in 1987 and can confirm that this actually happened.)

> THE LOWS ARE PRETTY GREAT AND THE HIGHS ARE RIDICULOUSLY HIGH

EVERY great band has a moment when all the elements that make them great come together. For some bands, it's on their first album, or even single: but this took longer for New Order, who'd already been forced to break themselves down to basics after the end of Joy Division and begin again (most bands only have to invent themselves once: New Order did it twice). All the greatness of the band was there, just scattered around on singles, B-sides and album tracks. It took until *Low-life* for all the elements that make New Order great to come together in the same place – resulting in a ballistic, confident, and entirely consistent album crammed with powerful melodies, inventive arrangements ("Face Up" is Kraftwerk done both thunderous and jaunty, like Godzilla skipping), exciting lyrics, and a real sense that this is a band who can do anything. It is New Order's first truly great album.

"I BELIEVE EVERYTHING I SING – OUT OF TUNE OR NOT"

A revived New Order battle crippling shyness to discuss music and machines, journalists, the Haçienda and Bernard Sumner's urge to defend the Falklands. Beneath still waters, passions broil. "You should put your heart into something," Sumner tells **ADAM SWEETING**



MM 11/1/86

BY Stephen Morris's account, New Order are very shy. Very, very shy, in fact. I'd suggested to Morris, who's the drummer, that New Order often seem aloof, even entirely dismissive of their audiences. They play their songs, stop and walk off. End of story.

"Er..." said Morris, wincing in the general direction of the floor. "Very, very shy..."

Is that right?

"Certainly is. Cos you're just being yourself onstage. It would be quite easy to go 'are ya feelin' alright!' and all that, but... Good grief, no! I don't think we've been aloof. You can't really ignore an audience, it's a little bit intimidating, so you tend to find yourself getting annoyed back because you're feeling intimidated."

Listening to New Order's third and finest album *Low-life*, it's difficult to believe they could be so easily cowed. Its predecessor, 1983's *Power, Corruption And Lies*, was pretty potent stuff too, including as it did "Age Of Consent" and the enduring "Your Silent Face". But *Low-life* seemed bigger, assured and at ease with itself. Perhaps it had taken New Order this long to find themselves, develop a new forward-looking vision and exorcise the Ghost of Curtis Past.

STEVE SPELLER / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

New Order, 1986 (l-r): Bernard Sumner, Gillian Gilbert, Stephen Morris, Peter Hook with Rob Gretton

Funky four plus one more: New Order with manager Rob Gretton (centre), November 1,1985

KEVIN CUMMINS/GETTY IMAGES

PETER HOOK: "It was like the old getting-back-into-writing thing after Joy Division, and finally now we're back to how we were before he died. We're confident about everything that we do now, so that's nice. We feel we can rely on each other, if you like."

So it took a long time to shake off the past?

"Erm... I don't think it took as long as people thought. You still get people who say, 'ah, New Order are shit, Joy Division are the best.' But we're still Joy Division, there's no difference apart from the obvious one."

One chilly December night, New Order were on home turf at The Haçienda in Manchester, playing two sets for the paying punters and having a couple of numbers dropped into the *Whistle Test* live. We arrived for the soundcheck. Bernard Albrecht picked up a guitar, plugged it in and began to chug out some of his trademark throaty chords. Morris pottered about at his drumkit, firing off the occasional burst of drum machine, adjusting cymbals, tightening knobs and checking his banks of gadgets. The ghostly Gillian fingered a synthesiser impassively. Manager Rob Gretton, a kind of hippy Jack Hargreaves, looked on with his hands in his pockets.

It was the arrival of Peter Hook which abruptly set the chemistry in motion. Hook, unshaven, gingery-blond hair tied back and flopping over the collar of his heavy black leather biker's jacket, is part Monster of Rock, part Ian Botham when he has an Australian in his sights. He wears his bass low-slung, treating it more like a trial bike than a musical instrument.

The sound is something else. According to Bunnymen bassist Les Pattinson, Hook plugs his bass through every device available, and it hits you like a falling log, a soaring, supercharged cudgel of sound. It seems to push back the walls and raise the ceiling, giving everybody else room to do whatever they like, secure in the knowledge that a sound like that couldn't possibly let you down.

Hook unloosed a few volleys of notes, then the group dropped in behind his zooming riff for a new song called "As It Is When It Was". A powerful and spacious piece, it bears more than a passing resemblance to "Love Will Tear Us Apart". Hook grinned evilly to himself. Some *Whistle Test* personnel paused to listen, dressed, of course, in the obligatory media-punk style. New Order don't even seem to look at each other while they play, but they must be listening. Suddenly they've become shockingly good, full of confidence and guts.

"I never noticed that until somebody pointed it out to me, funnily enough," said Hook after the second set. "Our American agent, it was – she said 'play that "Love Will Tear Us Apart" one'. I thought fuckin' 'ell, yeah, it is! Wild! That was one we played on the *Whistle Test*, it's a really good song. Just shows you, you can rip yourself off, even if you do it unconsciously."

Better than having Trevor Horn doing it for you, Hook laughed expansively. He's not easy to feel at ease with, though talkative enough. Even his gestures of relaxation seem exaggerated – he answers some questions too quietly, he leans back a little too far in his chair, eyes you with a mocking grin. He makes you aware you're under scrutiny.

"People think we're very awkward because we won't do things. I'm not gonna do your photographs because I don't feel like it. I don't mind talking. I feel like talking because I've been in the studio every night for two weeks, but I just don't feel like having me picture took.

"I don't do anything unless I want to do it. I do it sometimes for an easy life, when you're too fucked to argue about it or something. But you always regret it in the morning."

That seems like a fairly macho attitude to life.

"Could be, mmm," Hook agreed readily. "You're probably right. But that might be down to the fact that I can get away with it, because of the way Factory works. If any of us didn't want to do something, the others wouldn't expect him to do it. Because, y'know, what's the point? There's no point in playing a certain song if someone really doesn't want to do it."

THE PRESS

BERNARD: "We had a report from WOMAD in your newspaper which gave us a really shitey review. I bet you don't print this but she was actually completely out-of-her-box drunk, blacked out when we were playing. And she gave us a really bad review. She wasn't even there, which I found particularly annoying. She said we never did an encore. I don't like people who lie."

PETER: "It's interesting to talk to people who are interested in what you're doing, whether they think you're shit or whether they think you're great. You can learn something.

"It comes down to respect, doesn't it? You seem alright to talk to, you don't seem too bad. Quite interesting, y'know what I mean?"

You're too kind.

"But he wasn't interesting – he just did it very badly, so he got treated badly. What do you expect? Ask someone jokey questions and you're gonna get jokey answers."

New Order have perhaps been dogged by their reluctance to explain themselves, or to give anybody much idea of what they're really like. With the exception of Hook, though, they seem genuinely introverted, even painfully so. They and the Bunnymen are mutual fans, not necessarily to the point of loving every song the other has recorded, but because of a sense that they share the same attitude. Les Pattinson came over to Manchester for the Haçienda appearance, on the eve of the Bunnymen's British tour. Hook's rock'n'roll star stage gyrations amuse him greatly, presumably in contrast to his own onstage passivity.

THE HAÇIENDA

BERNARD: "We've got money invested in it. The original idea was that it was a loose club where you could go and hear loose music, not stiff music, and also you didn't have to get dressed up to go. Anyone could come here, anyone at all."

So it's anti-*The Face* type of attitude?

BERNARD: "Yeah, but people like that can come as well. Originally we intended it to be a bit more of a venue but it's turned out to be more of a disco than a venue. It was also just to establish a scene in Manchester, maybe like in the early days of Factory when we 'ad a club which is now called the Russell Club which was then called The Factory, in Moss Side. But that got a bit rough, people gettin' beat up outside and mugged."

PETER: "The idea of The Haçienda was a club that wasn't accompanied by any bullshit, where you could get in dressed as you like, which Manchester at the time didn't have. It didn't have a club where you could go out. I never used to fuckin' get in anywhere, except if there was a gig, then they'd let you in. The Haçienda was the first club where you could get in dressed as you liked. And I had to fuckin' open it!

"Now in Manchester all the clubs are like that, The Haçienda has had a really good effect on Manchester as a whole. Again, I think it's important to show that you're willing to put something back in. We work really hard on this place. I do the sound system meself, the PA for the disco and things like that. It's good cos you can learn to do something that's different, as opposed to just knowing about being in a group. You're learning how a club runs. You gather a wealth of experience."

In the bowels of The Haçienda, New Order sat quietly with various friends and associates. The tables were covered with beer bottles and rizla packets. Stephen Morris and Gillian were perched next to each other on a faded sofa, talking so quietly that they might have been conversing telepathically. Albrecht wandered over and said hello, looking quizzical and wide-eyed. "Anyone seen Hooky?" he asked.

"He went home," said Gillian.

"Hope he's here soon," said Bernard.

Two minutes later the door thumped open and Hook strode in, scarved and leathered. "Evening all," he said cheerfully. There was a sense of tension lifting. They were onstage in 15 minutes, and TV doesn't like to be kept waiting.

Factory supremo Tony Wilson flitted about busily, a brusque, fast-talking figure who likes to do everything at once. No doubt Paul Morley learned a thing or two from Wilson back in his Manchester days, like how to be too bloody clever for your own good. Without New Order, Factory would probably bite the dust. As it is, the company remains a great Mancunian curiosity, a quirky throwback to the arty days of post-punk somehow threading its way through the revisionist mid-eighties.

> "I DID THINK OF JOINING UP WHEN THE FALKLANDS CONFLICT WAS ON. PATRIOT, MATE, I'M A PATRIOT"
> BERNARD SUMNER

LIFE DURING WARTIME

Would you ever move away from Manchester, Bernard?

"Not at the moment. I did think of joining up when the Falklands conflict was on. That was the nearest thing."

Seriously?

"Patriot, mate, I'm a patriot."

You'd really have gone?

"If it wasn't for the group or me family, yeah."

That's a very unfashionable thing to say.

"Yeah, I know it is, but I don't believe in bullying, I don't believe in aggression. I think Argentina was aggressive. It's real unfashionable but they shouldn't have done what they did."

Have you got friends in the army?

"Yeah. Me cousin David's in the army. He's in Germany."

So does all this somehow relate to "Love Vigilantes", then (a tale of a soldier returning from war)?

"Yeah, I suppose it does in a way. I believe basically that war's wrong, fighting's wrong, but defending yourself isn't wrong. If someone hit me I'd hit 'em back, I think most people would. Personal opinion. I mean, no-one condemned the British for fighting the Germans in World War Two, and it was right what they did. It was fuckin' right.

"But suddenly it's not right if the British stand up for their own territory in the Falklands. It's easy to sit on your arse in a warm, comfortable living room and take one side or another, but the basic fact is that Argentina was aggressive and we weren't. They took the first initiative."

What about the argument that Mrs Thatcher went to war in the Falklands purely for political gain?

"Oh, I think what Mrs Thatcher did was really bad. It's really bad that she's come out of it with credit. She should have been kicked out of government because of it. It should never have happened, part of it was her fault, but nevertheless Argentina shouldn't have invaded a neutral or foreign country. It's like someone walking into your house and saying 'this is my house now'.

"I mean, I don't condone things like Vietnam. I ain't a fookin' military maniac. But if someone invades your country it's not fair, is it? People said the Falklands was over land but it wasn't, it was about all the British people who lived there. They didn't want the Argentinians there."

It might have been over oil, too. There's oil down there.

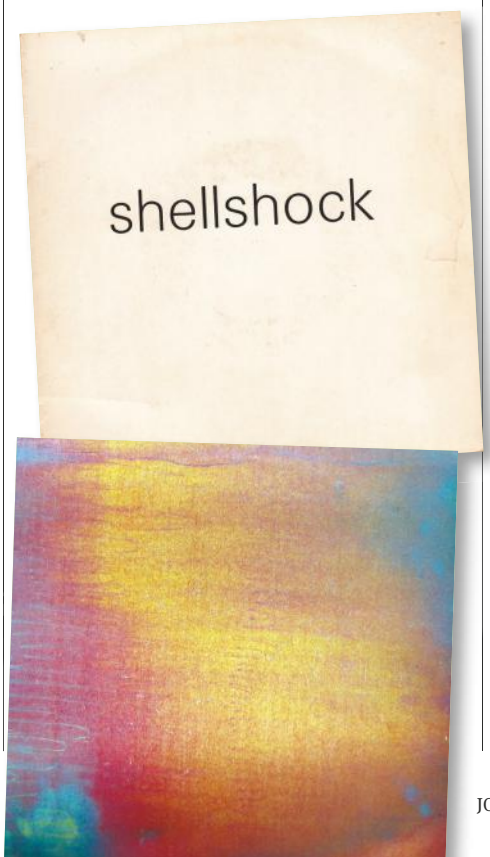
"Yeah, that's the perfect cynical viewpoint to jump to."

War's a pretty cynical thing. Seeing the Falklands veterans with melted faces is nauseating. Shouldn't we be past all that now?

"I think we should be past it. War is disgusting, it's really disgusting. But you've got to defend yourself. You're always right if you don't take the first action. It's the people who take the first action who disgust me. I've never attacked anyone in my life."

And as for "Love Vigilantes"...

"It's very tongue-in-cheek, it's like a rebel song but it's very tongue-in-cheek. It's kinda laughing at rednecks. From what I said you may construe it to mean that I'm a redneck – I am not a redneck, I assure you, and 'Love Vigilantes' is like laughing at rednecks. The more ridiculous my lyrics are, the less serious the song is."



ROOTS

BERNARD: "Originally we come from punk roots, which I liked because it didn't exclude anyone. It didn't matter what you looked like, whether you were fat or thin or ugly or beautiful. It was really down to earth, really down to earth. It was very anti-grown-ups at the time but I think it was really good. We still believe in it and this is our way of showing that we still believe in it. We don't believe in snobbery, to put it simply. Or elitism. We've been accused of being elitist, which we're not."

New Order performed with transcendent power that night. They'd completed a string of British

dates only a couple of weeks before, but already they'd completely rearranged the set and shoved in several impressive new songs. The Haçienda couldn't have been designed to make watching a group more uncomfortable. Balconies, stairs and the slightly raised dancing area were crammed and impassable. Ribs and girders block your view from several angles.

But you could still feel the sheer torque they were generating onstage. The veteran "Temptation" has never sounded better, a euphoric gallop of chattering electronics whipped by thrashing chords. "Shame Of The Nation", or possibly "Shame Of A Nation", will probably be the next single, and is as terse a song as the group have written.

The newest songs seem immense, giant structures of sound encompassing long climactic instrumental passages. Albrecht doesn't have to worry too much about singing, and hunches twistedly over his guitar as his hands scrabble spastically across the strings. Hook does the splits, Iron Maiden-style, over his bass. Gillian is improbably still, busy channelling New Order's new technology into strong, glittering patterns, while Morris batters away at the back among his kit and his machinery. The sense of aimlessness they sometimes used to display has gone, and if the songs are getting longer now it's because the group have learned how to manipulate atmosphere.

> "THE NAZI THING JUST GOT TO BE A JOKE BECAUSE EVERYBODY KNEW IT WASN'T TRUE. WE USED TO GET REALLY FED UP WITH IT"
> STEPHEN MORRIS

AUDIENCES

PETER: "I don't feel any compulsion to pander to them, I don't see the point. Cos most of them are real c___s, – they shout at yer, they scream at yer, they spit at yer, they throw bottles at yer. I mean a lot of them aren't, it's like typecasting your audience, but the point is the ones who just stand there and listen you never get to meet, do yer? The fucking loudmouths who are throwing and spitting and screaming 'Warsaw' and fucking 'Transmission' – it's really boring.

"Some c--- tonight shouted 'Warsaw'. Must think they're being really clever. Dickheads. The world's full of people, unfortunately."

"There might be another Sex Pistols," said Peter Hook whimsically later that night. "We might be the next Pistols. What a nice thought."

You might be the next Genesis.

Hook chortled. "That's what a lot of people say we are. The next Mike Oldfield. The next Mike Oldfields. But it's a rotten business. I'm glad I'm out of it, to be honest. I watch *Top Of The Pops* and I feel very far removed. The funny thing was I had real good fun doing *Top Of The Pops*. It was a great day, really enjoyable, and even though it didn't sound that great because we played live, to me that was one of the biggest achievements.

"I watch bands like Orchestral Manoeuvres that started the same time we did and were on Factory. They could have done exactly the same as we did, but they took the easy way out and signed to Dindisc and got a huge advance, and they were coming over and apologising to us for miming. Which I thought was really funny. Everyone did – Kajagoogoo and Human League, apologising to you for miming. Saying, 'we wanted to play live but we thought it was a bit tricky.' We must be striking something really deep within 'em to annoy 'em."

Stephen Morris remembers that day like this.

"We played live not really for any strong sense of commitment, like Keep Music Live or anything like that – it was just that we'd feel complete and utter prats miming. We're probably worse miming than we are playing, so... we just don't want to mime."

In Morris's determinedly low-key version of events, New Order proceed almost inadvertently forwards, avoiding humiliation and self-abasement at all costs. They've avoided putting their name to the assorted good causes available to today's rock star, though they've done an AIDS benefit recently.

"That's right," muttered Morris. "We haven't really. There's things that are obviously good causes and deserve attention but we're not sort of fucking crusading about anything, really. 'Convictions cause convicts'. We try to be open minded, really."

The "Nazi" slurs flung at both New Order and Factory wouldn't have anything to do with this heads-down policy, I suppose?

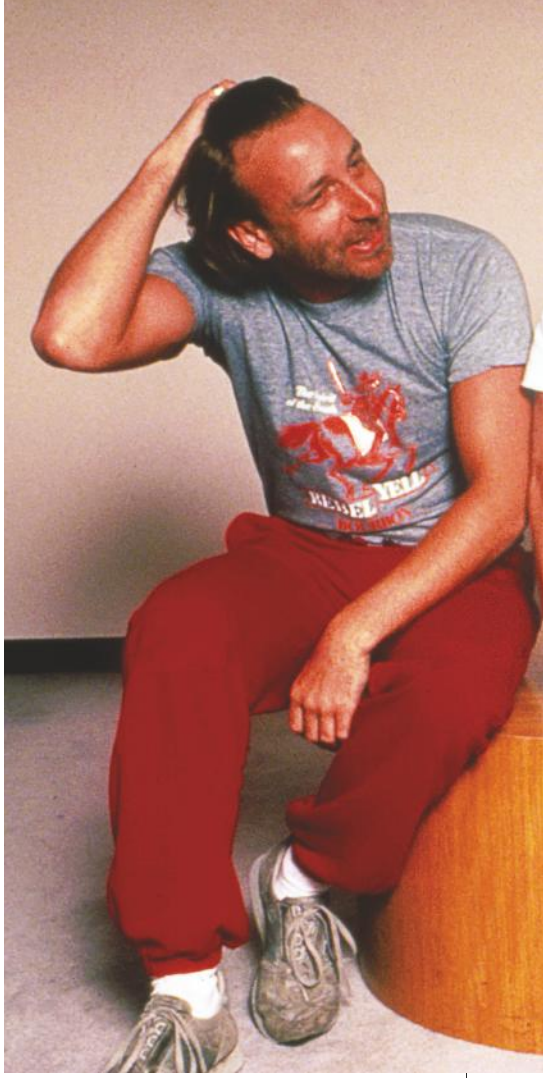
"That just got to be a joke after a while because everybody knew it wasn't true," Morris responded. "We just used to get really, really fed up with it. It's alright when it's being directed at you but when it's being directed at everybody on Factory, y'know, you feel a bit sick."

Why has the group got so good lately?

"We've just been working hard, I suppose. In fact it seems like longer than recently. It seems like forever."

New Order re-invest a substantial amount of their income in new equipment, which sounds great but takes a bit of getting to know. "It drives me piggin' mad actually," said Stephen. "It takes up considerably more time than playing something or making something up. The time it takes is unbelievable really. You find yourself getting a bit more musical because you've got to communicate with a machine. It's got to speak a language, and the people who make the machines decided the accepted notation of music was the way they'd do it. You found yourself being forced to get a bit more musical, so I suppose we got a bit better.

"Fortunately we've got some reliable stuff now, it doesn't break down so much. But when it breaks down, God! One could have kittens. Sequencers and stuff you can do a lot with but they become... y'know, everything that you listen to has got one which is a shame, but people are funny like that. Everybody sort of leaps in on things like punk and whatever, and all of a sudden there's loads of things that are all very nearly the same."



You can get a glimpse of an earlier New Order in their *Taras Shevchenko* video, shot at the Ukrainian National Home in New York in 1981 (it's released on Factory's video offshoot, Ikon). The performances are rough but forceful, primitive stuff in comparison to the post-*Low-life* New Order.

"I quite liked that video," observed Morris, "because by the time it came out it was a historical document, it was years gone by. I thought it was quite good really, but I think the Joy Division one was better because it's got a bit more crudity about it. Some of the Super 8 footage is really good because it's tacky, because it's there, and it's not planned."

There was one question I had to ask. Why did Ian Curtis always look fuzzy or totally invisible in photos of Joy Division?

"He actually looked like that, strange to say," said Morris, unperturbed. "I can't say I've noticed. I can't stand looking at photographs. I don't really like looking at videos. It's like when you hear your voice recorded on tape, you go 'that's not me!' and videos are the same thing only worse. Oh God, no! I find it a bit embarrassing."

The group's changed a lot though, even since that Ukrainian Home video?

"Yeah. We went a bit high-tech. It's quite quaint cos in that video all that stuff was hand made, it's all held together with a piece of string, literally.

"We might be the next Pistols": New Order circa 1985

"There was nothing so complicated as a polyphonic sequencer or anything like that, it was cottage industry stuff. Not even a Drumatix (drum machine), it was before all that. So when the Drumatix came in, my God! You'd give your right arm for a Drumatix.

"We had gadgets when we were Joy Division, they were just slightly lower-budget gadgets. We used to have a little synthesizer and a little Woolworths organ which always came in handy for things, and the favourite of all was the Shin-Ei Fuzz Pedal so beloved of the Jesus And Mary Chain – yes, you're onto a winner there! A classic. It had 'Shin-Ei Fuzz' written on it, it was great."

POLITICS

PETER: "I think the only politics I'm interested in are Factory politics. Cos that's what's nearest and dearest to my heart if you like. I'm more interested in what's going on around me, that I can affect, than some fucking... I've seen all this socialism bullshit that Paul Weller goes on about..."

Why is it bullshit?

PETER: "Because you go on his tour and it's just run like a normal rock'n'roll tour, rock'n'roll excess, everything that's fucking bad about it. And how he can fucking spout on about socialism and things like that and then he doesn't do anything about the things he can change in the way that he runs his business... I mean, Paul Weller is a really big business, y'know what I mean, and he's got the power just with what he does to affect a lot of people's lives. Like what you meant about The Haçienda here. But he doesn't. It's like charity should start at home. You tell other people what to do and don't practise it yourself – that's really bad."

Bernard Albrecht sipped his tea, then let his shoulders sag and sighed heavily. "God, I'm so tired," he said weakly. "This will be the strangest interview you've ever done," he'd promised as he led the way through the labyrinthine basement of The Haçienda to a neon-lit corridor about four feet wide. We sat in chairs facing each other. It was like an interrogation scene from *Midnight Express*.

"It's quiet here," Albrecht explained. He looked about 14 years old, and spoke in a fragile whisper. "Bernie's funny," said Mac [*Ian McCulloch from Echo & The Bunnymen*] once. "He just sits and looks at yer, like he's a little kid or something."

I didn't dare speak too loud in case he dropped dead in front of me. The group had been holed up in the studio for a fortnight, working with American producer John Robie on some new material including a song for a movie called *Pretty In Pink*. Robie, a regular collaborator with Arthur Baker, wrote the music for "Planet Rock" and Freeez's "IOU".

He was also responsible for the thundering 12 inch remix of "Sub-culture", a masterpiece according to some (me) but evidently a bone of contention within the group. Robie had cracked the whip over Bernard's vocal, and also added some belting female singers to beef up the choruses. Bloody good idea, because Albrecht's voice, although apparently frail in the appropriate dosage, has often been the weak link in the New Order equation.

"John gives you discipline, and then I can put my own expression onto that discipline, whereas what I've been doing in the past is no discipline, just expression, complete expression. If it's out of tune a lot of people won't listen to it. I do admit that a lot of what I sing is out of tune, but every single word, every syllable that I sing, I believe it whether it's out of tune or not.

"He's shown me that what you can do with vocals is stress a point. You don't have to shout, you can use a melody to stress a point. He's just shown me another way of doing the same thing."

New Order maintain a delicate balance between the cool precision of their machines, Albrecht's erratic vocals and the occasional raggedness of their playing. Is it a case of deliberately pitting human error against microchip perfection?

Albrecht chuckled. "Not deliberately. Er... it's a difficult one, that. Don't know, I just do it. But I'm a bit of a lazy bastard so anything that's difficult I'd rather..."

Do you practise the guitar?

"Never, no. I never sit and practise anything. I hate it. But whether that's a good thing or a bad thing is open to debate. But I think us as a group and John as a producer suffer from the same thing, which is we don't actually get recognised enough, but the people that rip us off get recognised more than we do. I don't like to name names, but we have been ripped off and the people who ripped us off are more successful than us."

But you're pretty successful anyway, surely? Does it worry you that much?

"I don't worry about that at all but if you've got a chance to put it right you should put it right."

Is tenacity a Mancunian characteristic?

"It's everybody's characteristic. You've got to float on top of the water, not underneath it."

When the group aren't working, Albrecht claims to do as little as possible for long periods of time.

"I'm a complete and utter lazy bastard, and if we're not recording I don't do anything, I just think a lot, lie in bed and think a lot."

Do you read books?

"I'm really bad at reading, cos I read really slowly. But two years ago I decided that television was complete and utter rubbish, garbage, and that I should read more. So for the past two years I've been trying to read and it takes me about six months to read a book. That's not a joke, it actually does, I'm very slow, I don't know why.

"The last full book I read was *The White Hotel* by that guy DM Thomas, which is really good but it's really disturbing. It's about a case study of Freud's. And I've been trying to read a book about Van Gogh called *Lust For Life*. I just feel like if someone's remained through history, if they're still well known after years and years, then you should know about them."

You say you're not elitist, but it looks like it sometimes. I remember a show at Brixton Academy where New Order treated the audience with utter contempt.

"No, I was contemptuous of ourselves, actually. It was the first time we'd played in like... these are things nobody ever knows, but it was the first time we'd played in three or four months. It was a really bad gig, we thought we played really badly. I just felt ashamed. I felt mad at myself, I didn't feel mad at the audience."

A perfectionist?

"No, I just believe you should put your heart into something if you're gonna do it. But partly it was my fault for having the wrong attitude. When you do a gig you should do it so that you enjoy the music when you're playing, enough so that you can play the music well. If you enjoy what you're doing it's easy."

CREDIT: PICTORIAL PRESS LTD / ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

NEW ORDER

BROTHERHOOD

Rock and dance face off for the soul of New Order. Playful schizophrenia ensues. | *By* **JON DALE**

THOUGH it's long been overshadowed by its single, the thrilling sugar-rush of "Bizarre Love Triangle", *Brotherhood* is a significant New Order album for one major reason: it sounds like the first album where the group haven't had to prove that they are, in fact, New Order. From the unilateral disarmament of *Movement*, through the psychedelic explorations of *Power, Corruption & Lies*, to *Low-life*'s elegance and freneticism, there was always a bit of a question mark hanging over exactly what this group could do, and who they should be.

On *Brotherhood*, New Order finally fill their own shoes. They have a bit of fun with that history while doing so, though: *Brotherhood* is marked by knowing nods to Joy Division, from the "Isolation"-like riff that opens "Broken Promise" to the quote from "Love Will Tear Us Apart" that ends "Way Of Life". This was a group confident enough in themselves that they could quote from their past without anxiety. And if *Low-life* was a stately album, with "Elegia" its crystalline core, then *Brotherhood* is its raucous, loose relation. It's unpredictable, playful, and maybe just a little confused.

Like many New Order albums, though, *Brotherhood* wasn't without its fractures. Conceived as a dialectic, one side of guitar-based rock and another of electronic-based songs, it's certainly a tight, yet spiralling effort. Peter Hook once said, "There were battles raging on *Brotherhood*" – he's given to playful overstatement, but it's not too hard to interpret the album as the many, ever-duelling sides of New Order. Looking back, decades later, Stephen Morris seemed almost rueful, telling Fred Pessaro, "It was kind of done in a schizophrenic mood... it didn't quite work. I like it better when it's mixed up a bit more."

New Order were looking for a retreat of sorts when they headed into Windmill Lane in Dublin in April 1986. Having started work on *Brotherhood* in earnest, recording backing tracks at Jam in London, they were finishing off the album with vocals and overdubs, something that got a little out of control as Sumner would later tell Ian Harrison: "It was a very dense album, because we'd gone a bit mad on overdubs, so it was very layered, and very dense." Morris is, typically, rather more direct and to the point: "There's too much on it."

Sumner's sometimes-lackadaisical approach to lyrics was also still present, even when they moved to the final stages of recording and mixing at Amazon. "Echo & The Bunnymen were next door," Morris remembered, "and Mac (the Bunnymen's singer and lyricist, Ian McCulloch) was amazed at us all sitting at the mixing desk, desperately trying to come up with words!" That might explain some of the, well, looser lyrics on the album, more of which later. But it also tells us plenty about the group New Order had become, road-worn from international touring and constantly in demand as a key part of both Factory Records and the Haçienda nightclub: swotting before the final exam, writing lyrics at the very last minute.

CRITICS' VERDICTS

"Infuriatingly enigmatic, every song strains between adrenalised passages of thundering majesty and lyrics of such embarrassing openness that the listener is forced to impugn motives to thier apparent schizophrenia."
STEVE SUTHERLAND, MM, SEP 27, 1986

"This swings in blither fashion than *Low-life*."
CATH CARROLL, NME, SEP 27, 1986

TRACK MARKS

1. Paradise ★★★★★
2. Weirdo ★★★★
3. As It Is When It Was ★★★
4. Broken Promise ★★★★
5. Way Of Life ★★★
6. Bizarre Love Triangle ★★★★★
7. All Day Long ★★★★
8. Angel Dust ★★★
9. Every Little Counts ★★★★

Label: Factory
Recorded at: Jam, London; Windmill Lane, Dublin; Amazon, Liverpool
Produced by: New Order
Personnel: Bernard Sumner (vocals, guitars, synthesisers, programming); Peter Hook (bass, electronic percussion, programming); Stephen Morris (drums, synthesisers, programming); Gillian Gilbert (synthesisers, programming)
Highest chart position: UK 9; US 117

Indeed, much of *Brotherhood* was written in the studio, and it says much for the benign pressure of deadlines that the album is so concise and coherent. As much as it's layered – stacked, vertically, with great detail at times – it also passes by at a fair clip; this was New Order's most rock album of their first decade, and it was an album that rarely paused for thought. "Paradise" opens the album, a song carried by an unnamed dread or anxiety, all backhand drama and sly recrimination, yet there's desire and lust at its core. Tight, oppressive, it insinuates its way into the listener's ear.

The joyous clatter and strum of "Weirdo" follows, a 180-degree turn, frantic guitars chiming through the song as though New Order were returning the 'favour' of The Cure's "In Between Days". With "As It Is When It Was", they dial down the volume and play an acoustic reverie of rare sensitivity, at least until its final quarter explodes, trying to shake its way out of its own skin. Another song reminiscent of "Love Will Tear Us Apart" – when pointed out to Hook after they premiered the song for the *Whistle Test*, he proclaimed, "fuckin' 'ell, yeah, it is! Wild!" – it was recorded in only two takes, the better to maintain its fragility. "They played it all at once," engineer Michael Johnson recalled, "Gillian, Peter and Barney in the control room, the drums outside."

THAT sensitivity carries over to side two, where "All Day Long" takes on the sober topic of child abuse, Sumner's voice frail and keening, the group's performance tender and muted, with hints of Wagner swelling through the sampled strings near the end. It's a song Morris looks back on fondly: "I just think it's a lovely song," he told Pessaro. "It doesn't have any drumming on it, but I like it as a song." There are a few songs that don't quite reach these heights – "Way Of Life" is fun, but inconsequential; "Angel Dust" seems to be marking time, though its use of sampling and its nervous energy make it oddly compelling. Towering over everything, there's the ecstatic melancholy of "Bizarre Love Triangle", which would become their crossover hit in America and Australia (where it reached No 5 in the pop charts).

The last word, though, must go to "Every Little Counts". Iconic in New Order's career, it's most memorable for Barney dissolving into laughter while trying to deliver the song's second couplet, *"I think you are a pig/you should be in a zoo."* Musically, the song was based on "Walk On The Wild Side", while the swarm of string drones at the end and the glitchy, scratched record that ends the song, and the album, hint at "A Day In The Life".

"We got to this last song and I started singing it dead serious but when I got to that line about a pig... it just sounded ridiculous and I burst out laughing," Sumner told Roy Wilkinson. "We could have done it again, but we thought, fuck it, it works as it is." Keeping that moment in the song is a gesture made by a confident group, disarming the listener with the band's sly northern humour. As the ending to their most mature statement yet, it's oddly perfect.

> THE MOST ROCK ALBUM OF THEIR FIRST DECADE AND ONE THAT RARELY PAUSED FOR THOUGHT

NEW ORDER

SUBSTANCE

Finally compiled, New Order's singles chart an extraordinary journey of disco-rock redemption. | *By* **DAVID QUANTICK**

ONCE upon a time, a singles compilation was the only real way to track the high points of a band's career: when it was considered dishonest or a rip-off to put the 45s on the album, a singles collection would be nothing but excitement, variety and a map of the act's development and adaptability. This state of affairs held true for the three-minute upheavals of the 1960s, worked fine for punk, and in the brief era when "independent" meant sudden attacks of brilliance and not sub-corporate landfill, was good for the independent labels of the 1980s.

Nowhere else was this so apparent as with New Order. While the sister set to this album – a Joy Division collection of the same name – suffered from being a bitty sampling of singles, sampler tracks and oddments, New Order's *Substance* was not just a very good compilation of all their singles to date, but also a fantastic document of their development from wounded Joy Division survivors to internationally successful arena rock act. Even re-recordings like "Temptation" do nothing to harm its epic excellence and, with an extra disc of B-sides for completists, *Substance* charts an incredible journey.

Its first song is "Ceremony" – a surprising single at the time, not because the band were beginning their career with a Joy Division song but because it was such a step back, musically. "Ceremony" lacks the electronic sounds of *Closer* and sounds more like a companion to "Transmission" than Joy Division's future. New Order really emerge with "Everything's Gone Green", a song whose acoustic washes, urgent beat and actual whoops from Bernard Sumner indicated that this was a band heading for the dancefloor rather than the bedsit – a direction confirmed by the intense, Moroder-meets-Suicide pop of "Temptation" and, of course, the career-changing "Blue Monday", a single which would have defined a lesser band but instead gave New Order their own, distinct post-Curtis identity.

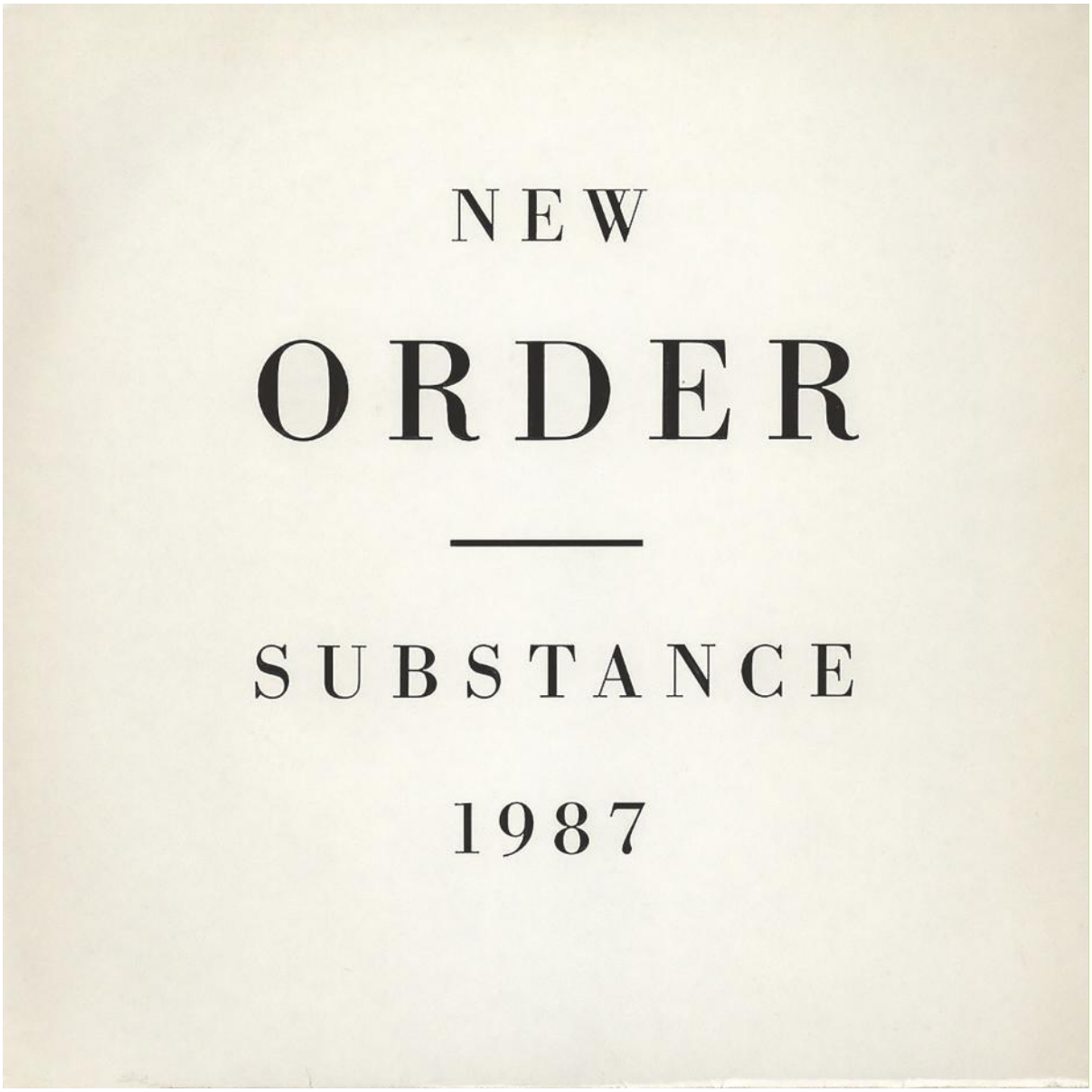
In a movie about New Order, the band would see that remaking "Blue Monday" endlessly was clearly the way forward, but this didn't happen. New Order's next move was to go to New York, fall in love with club culture, hook up with producer Arthur Baker, and make "Confusion" – a fairly regular Arthur Baker production and not a patch on other Baker singles like "Walking On Sunshine" by Rockers Revenge. Then, instead of doing an album of New York dance tracks, go back home and record "Thieves Like Us", a song cowritten by Arthur Baker that sounds nothing like an Arthur Baker song – long, epic in construction, and slightly navel-gazing (and also worth owning for Barney's *"Come in..."* on the instrumental B-side).

By the mid-point of *Substance*, things get mighty. Album tracks let loose into the wild like "The Perfect Kiss" and "Sub-culture" (remixed by John Robie in full dancefloor choral splendour) both indicate that New Order are lacking neither confidence nor brilliance, while standalone singles "Shellshock" and "State Of The Nation" show that even New Order could make generic dance-rock records with the best of them. While time has been kind to these two singles, they are blown away by the 12in version of *Brotherhood*'s catchiest track, the muscular and ethereal "Bizarre Love Triangle", a pop song trapped on a rock album, but none the worse for

CRITICS' VERDICTS

"Until New Order spread 'Hand Of God' across your earlobes, *Substance* is this country's only suggestion that greatness need never undersell itself. Another one to turn the Southern Bastards green."
PAUL MATHUR, MM, AUGUST 15, 1987

"*Substance* warmly illustrates New Order's positive route, a counter-revolution against glumness."
LEN BROWN, NME, AUG 15, 1987



TRACK MARKS

1. Ceremony ★★★★
2. Everything's Gone Green ★★★★★
3. Temptation ★★★★★
4. Blue Monday ★★★★★
5. Confusion ★★★
6. Thieves Like Us ★★★★
7. The Perfect Kiss ★★★★★
8. Sub-culture ★★★★
9. Shellshock ★★★
10. State Of The Nation ★★★
11. Bizarre Love Triangle ★★★★★
12. True Faith ★★★★★
13. In A Lonely Place ★★★★
14. Procession ★★★★
15. Cries And Whispers ★★★
16. Hurt ★★★
17. The Beach ★★★
18. Confused Instrumental ★★★
19. Lonesome Tonight ★★★★
20. Murder ★★★★
21. Thieves Like Us (instrumental) ★★★
22. Kiss Of Death ★★★
23. Shame Of The Nation ★★★
24. 1963 ★★★★

Recorded: 1981–1987
Produced by: Martin Hannett, New Order, Arthur Baker, Stephen Hague
Highest chart position: UK 1; US 36

that. "BLT", as nobody calls it, is a perfect example of what New Order were best at in the mid-'80s, namely making records that you could dance to in a club, putting guitars on them so that college radio would like them, and then just adding the strangeness and power that nobody else could do. Finally, it's time for "True Faith", arguably New Order's best pop song. *"I feel so extraordinary,"* sings Bernard, sounding it too, ushering in a new era of disco biscuits and pop success, a million galaxies away from the cold Northern student concerts where "Ceremony" was conceived. And we're out.

Except we're not: we've bought the CD (nobody bought vinyl in 1987) and we're on Disc 2, charting a parallel career beginning with "In A Lonely Place" and its heartfelt *"how I wish you were here with me now"* chorus. This is a blurred and shadowy New Order touting the aptly named "Cries And Whispers" and "Hurt". There's the beautiful "Lonesome Tonight", the terrifying "Murder", and finally, after all the instrumental versions and dubs, the gorgeous "1963". All these songs are great and strange, and most of them would have improved any album they might have been put on: which is, in fact, what has happened here.

(Note for people who like notes: there is an awful lot of, *er*, confusion and controversy about which versions of which songs have been rerecorded or remixed or edited here, but it's fair to say that the mixes and edits and reworkings chosen here are all as good as the original versions, which are available elsewhere in enough different versions to populate a parallel universe. But you do need both "Temptation"s and all 38 recordings of "Ceremony", probably).

BY THE MID-POINT OF *SUBSTANCE*, THINGS GET MIGHTY

EVERY long-lived band has a milestone album, not in the dull Rock And Roll Hall Of Death context but in the sense that a point has been reached which needs to be commemorated before the next part of the trip: *Substance* is that record for New Order, being a kind of summary of the story so far. And New Order have gone to make more records, most of which are excellent, together and separately, and with different lineups, but – with the end of Factory Records and a certain kind of attitude to making and releasing music – *Substance* is the only record which gathers together their hits and misses, their waifs and strays, in this manner. Even in a world where you can download any New Order compilation or indeed song you like, this is still an essential collection of the way they were.

"THERE ISN'T ANYONE COMPARABLE"

Following the release of a mighty singles compilation, New Order continue to thrive in the space between legendary amiability and actual legend. On tour in Germany, the "success story of punk" demystify their writing process and discourse on producers, flammable shirts and Joy Division. "If you can recreate an emotion," Stephen Morris tells **JAMES BROWN**, "that says a lot more than a thousand words of preaching."

NME | 19/12/87

A STUDY of the properties and kinetic energy of faith, beauty and power in the Western World as experienced through the songs of New Order.

Düsseldorf, December 1987. Peter Hook, bearded bass player with New Order, leans back into DM240 worth of comfortable German armchair and says:

"We're the only respected band in music, mate. You must know that. We're the only truly independent band, we're the only ones that do things because we want to do them. There isn't anyone who's comparable to us. You must know that."

He is correct. His case is concrete, his band faultless. Before you go any further you must know that to indulge yourselves in the pub grubbiness of most contemporary rock music whilst New Order are here for the taking is to masturbate cockroaches when you could be riding the backs of tiger kings.

This month New Order have released their 13th original single on Factory Records. "Touched By The Hand of God" comes too late to figure in the vinyl avalanche towards the Yuletide No 1 spot but is too stunningly emotive and addictive to be buried beneath the traditional creative stodge of the New Year. The band are undertaking three dates to promote it. Tonight they play Düsseldorf, followed by a night in Paris, and two days after that, a date at Wembley Arena, London.

It is the culmination of a year in which they have had their first ever Top Five hit with "True Faith", have toured Australia, Italy, Japan, and filled 17,000-seater stadiums in the USA; have answered rumours of a split with the terse statement "Up yer bum!', and then returned to America to refill yet more stadiums on a co-headlining tour with Echo And The Bunnymen. They have also achieved chart success with the release of the 1980-to-'87 singles compilation *Substance*. Of which more later.

As 1987 closes so well for them (and with "Touched By The Hand Of God" one of the few ecclesiastical references likely to bring anybody any joy over the holiday period), now is the perfect time to look at the sanitised musical beauty of New Order and the singular position in which their success has placed them.

Peter Hook's character is as strong and sharp as his Viking features. He is 31 years old, creates the most fearful booming bass sound, and wears motorbike trousers and boots to match the attractively expensive lightweight leather coat, the sort mounted police use for winter motorcades, which he sports on his back.

His interview manner can veer from being stern and absolute to a more informative and impressive vein. He considers your questions and acknowledges your points about New Order but always replies in a way that lets you know he is the authority on the band. And it's an authority no-one but the other band members can challenge.

"The funny thing I've found with rock bass players is that they play themselves down," he tells me. "They take a back seat. Now I'm not going to take a back seat, I'm not content to do that. If you take a band where everyone is doing something good, then they're usually great; but if you have a band and some of the members take a back seat, then they're just not going to be good. The Smiths are a good example – the drummer and the bass player took a back seat to Marr and Morrissey. And I still don't think Marr is as great as people

"We're the only truly independent band": New Order in France, 1987

DAVE ENNIS/PICTURES/AVALON

make him out to be, because I've listened to Smiths instrumentals and they're really boring. Marr is a great complement to Morrissey's vocals, but on his own it just doesn't sound up, he sounds dull. Together they were a great team, though."

Some people would suggest that Gillian and Stephen take a back seat in New Order because of both your own and Barney's more noticeable stage presence.

"In Joy Division. Stephen's drums played a really big role. If you listen to a lot of the early Joy Division stuff, the drums were really powerful riffs. Really powerful. 'She's Lost Control', 'Atrocity Exhibition', 'Lost Souls', 'Atmosphere'... the list goes on and on. Gillian has made us more spread instead of being focused, but a lot of the synths are Bernard's babies. So musically it's a balance."

> "WE WERE FOUR GUYS WHO USED TO GET PISSED A LOT, THEN THREE GUYS WHO'D GET PISSED A LOT"
> STEPHEN MORRIS

Peter Hook has a love for Joy Division that will always overshadow his feelings for New Order. He doesn't talk about the times before Ian Curtis's death in an abstract, dreamy sort of way. Those times are recorded in his mind as clearly as the songs are recorded on the LPs. *Closer* is his all-time favourite LP; Lou Reed's *Berlin* comes a close second.

Hook isn't bitter or jaded about his past, but it is the finality of Joy Division that he believes still magnetises a solid core of New Order fans. The more rabid ones, he points out, are ones still obsessed with Joy Division, but it doesn't disturb him that they don't have the same obsessiveness about New Order. "It's understandable. What New Order do is far stronger than Joy Division, but if you're talking about importance to people, then they put more importance on Joy Division, which is finished, than on New Order, which is happening now."

He goes on to describe the strangeness of receiving a fan letter from a girl who wanted to know who Joy Division were and why they are always mentioned in the same breath as New Order. Likewise, the popularity that the *Brotherhood* LP bought them in America has left many new fans confused when they play their earlier songs, from "Ceremony" right up to *Low-life*.

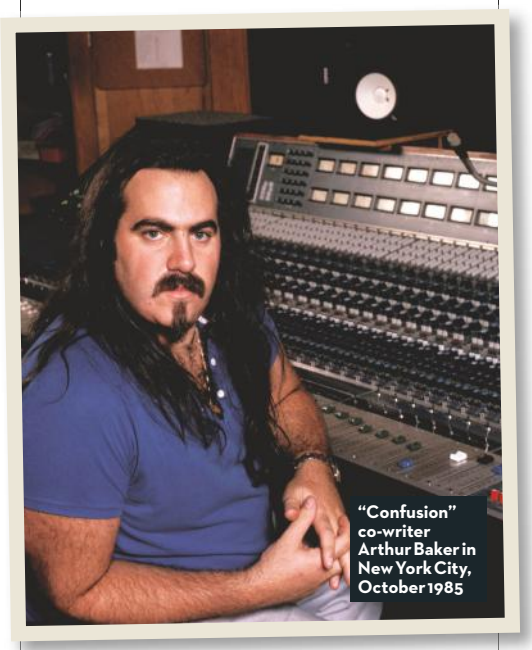
"A lot of Americans thought New Order started with *Brotherhood* and 'Bizarre Love Triangle'. They'd heard 'Blue Monday' but not known it was Joy Division... erm... New Order... Freudian slip.

"I can listen to Joy Division but not New Order," he continues. "Joy Division is over, so I can listen for musical enjoyment whereas when you listen to New Order you're listening to something you play, so you're always looking for something to pick up on. It's not subconscious but it's not conscious, it's about midway. The few New Order songs that I can listen to are ones we don't play, like 'Truth', 'Leave Me Alone' and 'Doubts Even Here'."

Hook's passionate memory of Joy Division is one which jars with the one Stephen Morris, while admitting complete overstatement, offers me later: "We were four guys who used to get pissed a lot, then we were three guys who used to get pissed at lot. And then all of a sudden you find out that this guy who used to get pissed a lot is some sort of intellectual genius."

Between themselves New Order have a strong and sardonic sense of humour. When asked by manager Rob Gretton, a huge lager-slugging polar bear of a man, why the band were still waiting in the dressing room whilst the road crew were travelling back to the hotel in the luxury of the first mini-bus run, Hook captured the tedium that is the 90 per cent of touring the public don't see, by replying: "We are sitting here in this dump because we are too fucking bored, stupid and lazy to move."

Gretton himself is something of a legend. One story goes that at an important American record company party for the band, a *Rolling Stone* photographer and New Order's US press officer were having trouble getting the band onto the roof for a front-cover photo session. In the increasing panic the press officer found Gretton sat in the middle of the throbbing party in a large armchair chain-smoking joints. When told about the situation all he did in response was consistently tell the *Rolling Stone* photographer to fuck off until the poor guy gave up trying. Thus New Order never did appear on the cover of *Rolling Stone*. Laid-back is the word that springs to mind when thinking of Gretton.



"Confusion" co-writer Arthur Baker in New York City, October 1985

Likewise, Hook shows his lack of concern for the long-dismissed accusations of flirtation with fascism when he says, "The Germans should like us, being New Order..."

When I tell him how surprised I am by the dryness of their humour and how I intend to communicate this here, he says: "In a way, when you try and break a myth in the perfect way then you're not going to achieve or gain anything."

It's as if the many myths that surround New Order are protection from an inquisitive world, and in a world where the hungry media can invade people's privacy so sinisterly, it's a protection that's needed. New Order have already suffered the sort of intrusion that puts a person off journalists for life. Bernard Sumner, Barney, the band's vocalist, like Freddie Mercury, will now only talk to one journalist per country a year.

He treats my arrival with disdain but after a while allows me to listen to his version of the night's main event, as he recalls it to his press officer. "I was stood there, half sitting on the chest of drawers and half standing, just like you are, talking. After a while I thought, 'This radiator's bloody hot', but I didn't really think that much of it. A minute later my whole back goes up in flames, I had been sitting against two lighted candles! There I was struggling and trying to get my shirt off and these bastards were just laughing, then one of them starts pouring vodka on me! Look at the hole; it cost me £40 that shirt, it's ruined."

Barney recounts this story in a vivid and entertaining manner. He enjoys your attention and responds to it by being visual as well as verbal. He has always refused to discuss his lyrics, merely casting them aside as the final things they throw on top of the music, but the wealth of emotion that is drawn upon to write even his most casual lines naturally prompts inquisitiveness.

As Peter Hook says, "no-one in New Order takes a back seat", and so it comes as a shock to watch Barney go off to bed as you're busy interviewing the other three.

Barney's vocals are what have made New Order so complete since *Low-life*. The release of the singles compilation, *Substance*, has illuminated New Order's musical development, which has progressed around Barney's search for his own voice. Up to "Temptation" he was tentatively probing the idea of singing, too often sounding like Curtis. With "Blue Monday", New Order exploded, Barney discovered his own style and in the time it took for that record to become the world's best-selling 12in ever, they had passed into another more confident and open-minded phase. On "Confusion" they worked for the first time with Arthur Baker, who pointed them more in the direction of commercial but stimulating dance music. With the release of "Shellshock" and then *Low-life* their ability to create expansive and often awesome dance music was unleashed in all its glory.

New Order had become the only British rock band to play exhilarating club/dance music live with bass guitar parts that sound like HM solos, and synthesisers pumping out melodies with all the sophistication of classical music.

Since then, the release of last year's *Brotherhood* and the excellent "Bizarre Love Triangle", and then this year's Top Five hit ("True Faith" co-written with Stephen Hague), New Order have become their most adventurous to date.

They have created a sanitised musical beauty. The gap between their dance awareness and the competition's club-footedness is as wide as the distance between Japanese and British technology. The magnitude of their craftwork often projects them out of the arena of common musical reference and debate. They have the

EBET ROBERTS/REDFERNS

Barney on stage in Mansfield, Massachusetts, August 18, 1987; (inset) that year's "True Faith" single

power of the Bauhaus school of art and the beauty of nature. Their songs are like the travel of a splash, the drops exploding upwards in slow-motion, through the thin crisp air and back down to the rippling surface.

They feel physical. Two or three times *Brotherhood* and *Low-life* have literally put me into a state of suspended animation, the layers of synthesisers rolling like electric waves through my body. They make mood music – bad mood music, but unlike alcohol, television and The Smiths, New Order are a stimulant, not a depressant. They drag you out of depression. The nicest thing anyone has ever said to me is that "Bizarre Love Triangle" reminds them of me. To inspire such an affinity to a song, New Order must surely be geniuses.

Their work is proof enough of that. The music is power-packed, yet beneath the banks of sound are stimulating catches like the soft solitary death knell at the close of "Sunrise" on *Low-life*. Likewise the humour behind the recording of the needle jumping out of the groove and off *Brotherhood* becomes quickly overshadowed by the finality of the noise.

There is a consistent energy that runs through the jerkiness of Barney's passionate stage movements and the boldness of Hook's bass-slung-low stage dance, through into the cool power of Peter Saville's stunning minimalist record sleeves.

Barney's cuteness, Gillian and Stephen's appearance, and the sheer bi-sexuality of their music have destroyed the stale macho stage behaviour that's traditional in rock.

Their songs hold attraction that demands a double-take, a mental refocus before you can

even begin to take in the enormity of the ability. There are so many unlikely parts fitted together in New Order songs. Hook's bass booms with all the depth of a cello as Gillian's orchestration of synthetic violins, kettle drums and Latin acoustic guitar is run over by Stephen's hi-NRG beat and percussion.

New Order's songs maintain all the qualities of power, structure and beauty. These shine even more so because they have been achieved in the foreign sterile world of disco music when New Order could have so easily chosen to make atmospheric noise. This progression has been particularly helped by the open-minded way they have chosen to work with a variety of producers...

Though he would rather remain as pure as The Fall, Peter Hook is proud of the fact that New Order are prepared to try anything to push themselves forward. From Martin Hannett he learnt how to layer sounds, from Stephen Hague he learnt that if you put time and money into a project you can make it smooth, and Arthur Baker, who produced "Touched By The Hand Of God" taught him that you don't have to be good to have a good time. "Before, when we worked with him on 'Confusion' he just went totally wild. We had thought he was going to be very precise and technical but he was just enjoying himself. It demystified the whole thing."

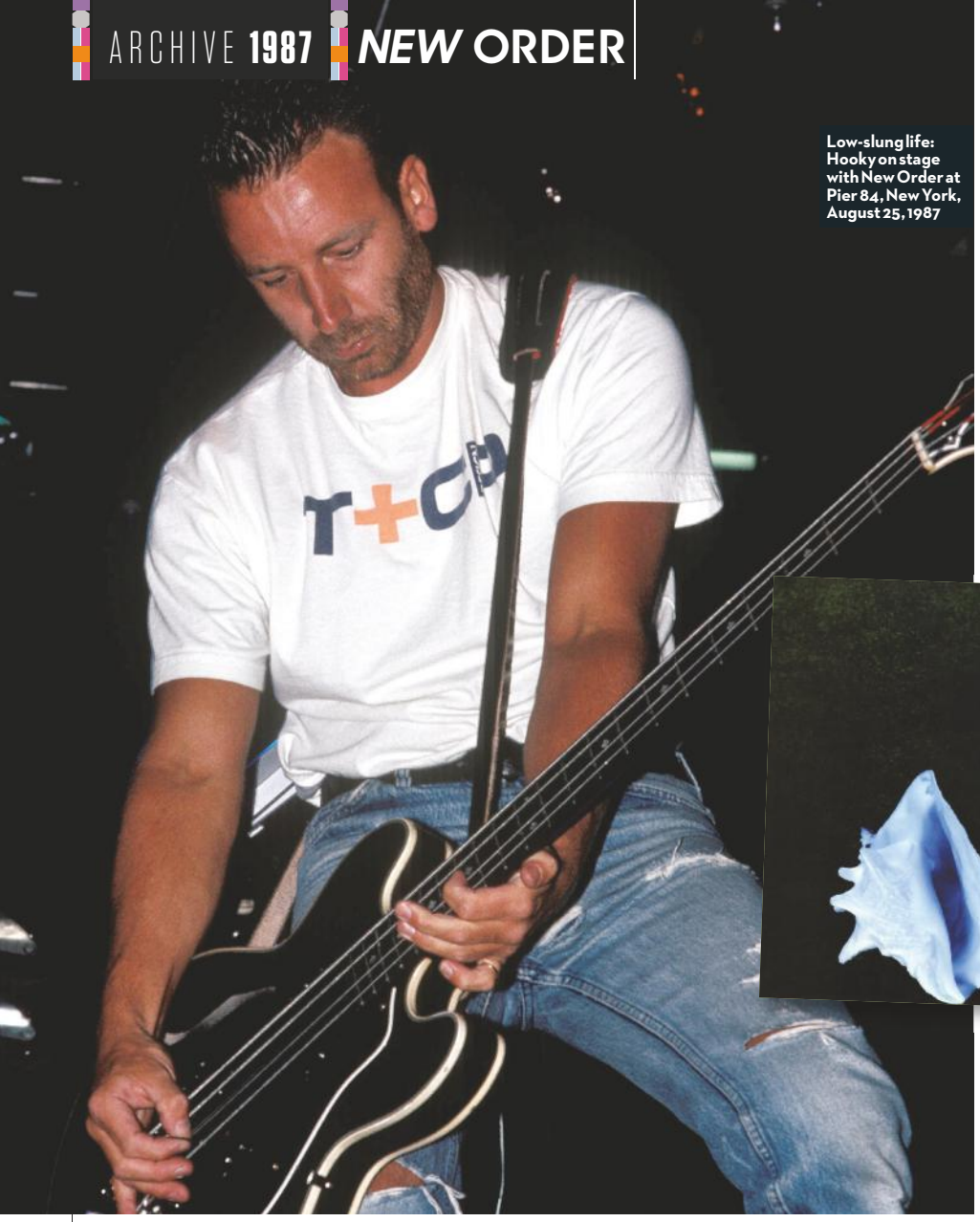
Stephen Morris, New Order's drummer, is equally enthusiastic about working with a variety of producers. "They've got something that you've not got. It doesn't have to be a producer – you could get a tramp off the street to do a producer's job, because what it does is give you another way of looking at what you're doing. You get so involved, it's good to have that fifth view. Obviously a tramp wouldn't be so well prepared."

Have any of the producers you've ever worked with behaved like tramps?

"Arthur Baker occasionally, but we won't go into that, ha ha ha. They've got a way of working, you've got a way of working, if you go their way then at the end of the day you come off wiser. They probably do as well because it's all educational. There's always something you can learn. To get stuck into doing the same thing all the time is the worst thing that could happen."

Stephen, and the band's fourth member, keyboardist Gillian Gilbert, in no way take back seats. They might be less obvious socially and visually than Barney and Hook, but when it comes to the interview, Stephen especially comes right out of himself. He laughs a lot, is hard to shut up, and offers probably the clearest insight into the way New Order work. The idea of tramps producing records stems from the days of his first ever group, The Sunshine Valley Dance Band, who, when they weren't drinking themselves

SUZANNE KREITER/THE BOSTON GLOBE VIA GETTY IMAGES



Low-slung life: Hooky on stage with New Order at Pier 84, New York, August 25, 1987

sick on cooking sherry, tried to get winos to sign contracts to produce them.

The only person ever to join New Order, Gillian is just as valuable to listen to. A fan of Joy Division, and already going out with Stephen before being asked to join New Order, Gillian still occasionally refers to the band as 'they'. Her opinions on New Order's appeal are often the most lucid. From the start she always thought of Joy Division as dance music, though as she's keen to point out, few others did. She also believes the reason New Order remain so fresh is because of the variety of musical interests spread throughout the band.

"Barney likes a lot of funky disco records," she says. "Hooky likes a lot of rocky, Sisters Of Mercy type of things, and I'm sure that sort of variety influences the way we sound."

"It's like the protest-singer syndrome," continues Stephen, still analysing why New Order are so original. "If you've got a message to get across and you're whinging on about how terrible life is, people will misunderstand what you mean. If you tell them 'red is blue', half of them will go, 'Oh yeah, I get it, red is green'. But if you can make them feel the same things as you've felt, if you can recreate an emotion and they recognise it, then that says a lot more than a thousand words of preaching."

> "BARNEY LIKES A LOT OF FUNKY DISCO RECORDS; HOOKY LIKES ROCKY, SISTERS OF MERCY TYPE OF THINGS"
> GILLIAN GILBERT

"The mixture of tastes makes it more interesting. Like 'Love Vigilantes' is a country & western song for me," says Gillian.

Why, because of the nature of the story?

"No, because we said, 'Right, let's have a harmonica part,'" butts in Stephen, "and the harmonica part ended up sounding like 'Grooving With Mr Bloe', which is an old country song. It has a mournful but optimistic feel."

I think "Touched By The Hand Of God" will probably last a lot longer than "True Faith".

"I'm glad you've said that, because there's an interesting story, and it will shed light onto the way some things work," says Stephen. "This girl called Beth B decided she was going to make a feature film, which turned out to be *Salvation!*. Through Michael Shamberg, who is Factory US, she asked us if we'd like to write some music for it. We thought, 'Yeah we'll do it.' It was a low budget of two grand, which meant we could only spend a week in a cheap studio, but because it was experience and seemed like a good thing to get into, we decided to do it.

"She turned up with a video of the film and said, 'I want music from here to here, here to here, and here to here.' So we were writing to pictures, and after five days we had all these atmospheric instrumentals. On the Friday at five o'clock she heard them and said, 'Oh, but I really wanted a song.' She was alright about it and we liked her, so we said, 'A song! You must be fucking joking! When do you want it for?' And she said she was leaving at seven in the morning.

"So by 7am the next day we had written, recorded and mixed this whole thing, and that was 18 months ago. But, and this is where the problems started to crop up, the upshot of which was that this song which could have been released at the time of 'True Faith', wasn't, because of thousands and thousands of bullshit reasons. Like 'There are too many syllables in the chorus for it to be a convincing pop song.'

"At the time we thought it sounded better than the idea of 'True Faith'," adds Gillian.

Substance and "True Faith" are appropriate titles to New Order. The speed at which young bands are picked up today, and their willingness to be taken so early, will prevent many from ever developing the quality of New Order.

It is the dominance New Order have maintained over the press and their own independence that draws the respect of so many bands. As Hook says, "New Order have changed and dallied in different things, and that is a plus point because it means you can stick to your ideals but use commercialism to give you the power to make your independence more important."

The motivation behind the power, the beauty, the success of New Order is their faith, their unwavering belief that they are the most exhilarating and challenging commercial band around. Unfortunately (for every other sucker who currently treads the boards) they are right...

As Stephen says: "It doesn't really matter that somebody else has done something that they consider is better than what you do, it's whether you think it's better than you. If you consider that something else better than you, then why are you bothering to do it in the first place? If you don't believe in yourself, then... why?"

New Order's faith is matched by their ability: "Shellshock", "Temptation", "Everthing's Gone Green", "Love Vigilantes", "Perfect Kiss", "BLT", "Blue Monday", "Angel Dust", "True Faith"... the list really is endless.

New Order have been touched by the hand of God. They are, as Hook believes, the "success story of punk". Why masturbate cockroaches when you could ride the backs of tiger kings?

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NEW ORDER

TECHNIQUE

To Ibiza, and don't spare the "party supplies". Balearic beats seep into the mix, which lift the divorce anthems but only widen existing cracks. | *By* **ROB HUGHES**

BY their own admission, New Order weren't exactly the most business-savvy band of the '80s. Which probably accounts for why they rejected Real World Studios, Peter Gabriel's new state-of-the-art facility in rural Wiltshire, for a less salubrious spot in Ibiza for the recording of *Technique*.

Horrid green shagpile carpet, infested with maggots, clung to the walls. Lizards scuttled across the ceiling. Stephen Morris complained that the only place he could get a decent sound was "this room in the back where the bloke from Judas Priest stored his drums". But there was also a perfectly slanted logic to the decision – it happened to have a swimming pool. Plus a 24-hour bar with its own bartender. And, as they discovered once they'd arrived on the Spanish island in the spring of 1988, a one-armed drug dealer called Pedro.

It was a wonder that New Order got anything done at all. Friends from Manchester kept flying over to partake in the local scene. Happy Mondays turned up (Bez totaled more than one car during their stay), Ecstasy was the latest new drug of choice and, incredibly, someone came up with the grand idea of adding the studio to the weekly itinerary of an 18-30 bus tour. The band only put a stop to it, as Bernard Sumner would detail in his memoir, *Chapter And Verse*, "when we found a pancake of sick smack in the middle of the pool table".

After four months in Ibiza, New Order came back with just one finished song, two incomplete sketches and a bunch of drum tracks. But the nightly ritual of partying and getting wasted wasn't entirely unproductive. Expecting more of the acid house music that was already gathering pace in Britain's major cities, the band were instead exposed to something different at hangouts like Ku, Manhattan and Amnesia. Balearic beat was a schizophrenic mash-up of deep house, disco, weird Europop, straight-up rock and more. "It was a really odd mix but it all seemed to make sense when you were there," Morris told *The Fader* years later. "Maybe because we were all a bit out of our brains... It was a state of mind, really."

The band duly set about transposing the euphoria of Balearic house onto the pieces they were working up in the studio. Just as New York City clubland had widened their horizons at the turn of the decade, opening up a world of hip-hop and electro, Ibiza directly informed the sunlit, dance-friendly utopia of *Technique*. Morris called it that "end of term, last day of school feel".

The hedonistic "Fine Time" was the first and most potent expression of all that. Recorded after a heavy night at Amnesia, it's a playful splash of synths, programmed rhythms and clever samples, including what sounds like a bleating sheep. Its decidedly unerotic come-ons, meanwhile, poke fun at disco's early era: *"You know I've met a lot of cool chicks/But I've never met a girl with all her own teeth."*

Though the song's title may hint at New Order's sybaritic pursuits on the island, the truth is far more prosaic. Morris's car had been towed away, so he wrote "Fine Time" on a scrap of paper as a reminder of when to pay the charge. By then, the band were back from what Factory boss Tony Wilson had

CRITICS' VERDICTS

"Never have veterans sounded so brilliantly arrogant, masters so eager. *Jesus. Technique* is so effortlessly *great*, so languidly heroic, so vibrant and thrilling despite itself, that one wishes one could weep."
CHRIS ROBERTS, MM, JAN 28, 1989

"An impressive polished edifice erected like a monjument to a newly discovered maturity and confidence."
JOHN TAGUE, NME, JAN 28, 1989

TRACK MARKS

1. Fine Time ★★★★★
2. All The Way ★★★★
3. Love Less ★★★
4. Round & Round ★★★★
5. Guilty Partner ★★★★
6. Run ★★★★★
7. Mr Disco ★★★★
8. Vanishing Point ★★★★★
9. Dream Attack ★★★★

Label: Factory
Produced by: New Order
Recorded at: Mediterranean Studios, Ibiza, Spain and Real World Studios, Wiltshire
Personnel: Bernard Sumner (vocals, guitars, melodica, synthesisers, programming), Peter Hook (bass, electronic percussion, synthesisers, programming), Stephen Morris (drums, synthesisers, programming) and Gillian Gilbert (synthesisers, guitars and programming)
Highest chart position: UK 1; US 32

scathingly referred to as the most expensive holiday they'd ever had. They got down to business in earnest at Real World, finishing *Technique* in seven weeks.

THE Second Summer Of Love was already underway in the UK. "Vanishing Point" caught the spirit of the age by osmosis, from its processed beats and deep grooves to its dramatic synth flourishes. Notwithstanding Sumner's ambiguous lyric, it's essentially Kraftwerk upscaled for rave culture, the sound of human rapture as harnessed by machines.

Technique isn't all good times, however. The pain of Sumner's recent separation from his wife is apparent on several songs. "Love Less" is as close as the album gets to downbeat, documenting a relationship that's soured into something spiteful. *"I worked hard/To give you all the things that you need /And almost anything that you see/I spent a lifetime working on you/And you won't even talk to me,"* he sings, with heartfelt candour.

Similarly, "Guilty Partner" feels like old-school New Order, governed by Peter Hook's moody bass and a terse rhythm. Sumner sounds torn between bitterness and regret: "To admit that I was wrong/It took me far too long." And while "Round & Round" could easily be about the same failed romance, it's actually aimed at Tony Wilson and the slow dissolution of the band's relationship with Factory. Over a clubby throb and sequenced drum patterns, the rift is made all too apparent: *"You waste your time, like my money/It ain't so funny, but it's true."*

> THE ALBUM SIMPLY COULDN'T FAIL... IT BECAME NEW ORDER'S FIRST UK CHART-TOPPER

Issued in January 1989, *Technique* landed in the space between Happy Mondays' *Bummed* and The Stone Roses' debut LP, as if designed to reassert their authority as masters of Manchester groove. The Haçienda, alongside local clubs like Thunderdome and Konspiracy, was then in full swing as the Northern powerhouse of acid rave.

Technique simply couldn't fail. Buoyed by the success of lead-off single "Fine Time", the album became New Order's first UK chart-topper. Reviews were almost unanimously positive too, with the *NME* gushing over "an LP of unflinching honesty, free from the masks of false identities of their past".

Yet the band's greatest triumph also signalled the beginning of a rift that only deepened in the coming years. New Order's full conversion to electronic dance music hadn't gone unchallenged. Peter Hook applauded the final result, but admitted later that the album sessions were "an epic power struggle between the sequencers and me. I was resisting it valiantly, because I still wanted us to be a rock band."

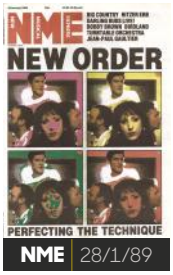
Before long, Sumner was busy furthering his synth experiments as Electronic, with Johnny Marr. Hook returned to rockier basics by forming Revenge, while Morris and Gillian Gilbert headed off as The Other Two. It would be four years before New Order released another album, by which time Factory Records was truly over. As were the party vibes.

"WE DON'T REALLY KNOW WHAT WE'RE DOING"

BOBBERG/GETTY IMAGES

Four sight: New Order in New York, October 1989

Fresh from the best *TOTP* performance ever, New Order deliver *Technique* amid reflection over the decade they've helped define. By turns trashing their own legacy and vowing to "educate" America, they wrestle with the idea of becoming as famous as U2. "If we were prepared to sweat at it, we'd be that big," Sumner tells **DANNY KELLY**, "but that would take all the fun out of it."



BOTH "TRANSMISSION" and "Love Will Tear Us Apart" were titanic 45s, sure, but I've never been able to fathom the near-religious adoration that Joy Division inspired. Ian Curtis's death was for me, therefore, not the end of something magical, but the beginning, the dawn of New Order. In the eight-odd years that have since whistled by, Hook, Sumner, Morris and new girl Gillian Gilbert have resisted the megabucks blandishments of CBS and EMI and remained ostentatiously, pigheadedly separate, while assembling a body of work that's veered crazily from incorrigibly half-baked lows to sense-numbingly wondrous highs.

Last year's *Substance* compilation showed just how stratospheric those highs have been and confirmed New Order as one of the great singles bands of the era. Of any era. It was a collection that would, in a more honest world, have convinced virtually every other band on the planet to hide in despair, to pack it in...

Substance, and the '88 remix of their "Blue Monday" anthem were a breather, a summation of the group's unique progress and their goodbye wave to the '80s before they headed off into the future.

So now – with the afterglow of their "Fine Time" hit still warming the Top 30's glacial frown, and on the eve of *Technique*, their long overdue fifth LP - seems like the perfect time to talk to New Order; about the decade they've spanned and illuminated, about the spaces they presently occupy and about the motivations that drive them on. Oh yeah, and about Acid House parties, rogue police dogs and the thrill of backing Desmond Lynam!

> "WE COULD QUITE POSSIBLY END UP AS AWFUL AS U2… NO, NO, NOT AS AWFUL, AS BIG"
> BERNARD SUMNER

EN route for our Argentine rendezvous, I get as far as New York while the group make it all the way to São Paulo, Brazil (and an audience of over 100,000), before our best laid plans are dashed by the small matter of a military coup.

Tanks in the boulevards of Buenos Aires... blood in gutters... mayhem, hysteria and crisis, the full works. The lengths to which some people will go just to avoid an interview!

Thus, instead of a pavement café on the Plaza Del Mayo, we make do with a pricey noodle-joint in downtown Manchester. Around the table sit Stephen and Gill (lovers and New Order's percussion and keyboards respectively), the mighty Peter Hook (bassist, rock icon, resplendent in lip-crimson track bottoms) and my nervous self. We're being basted in background muzak, glutinously sugary orchestrations of familiar poptones.

Right now, the Everlys' "Cathy Clown" is getting the treatment and Bernard Sumner ('Barney', NO's vocalist/lyricist/co-tunesmith) is late. His colleagues aren't surprised. "He's having his new house done out," they giggle. "He'll turn up and say, 'sorry I'm late, I've got the builders in...'"

On the New Order In-Joke Chart, Barney's Sybil Fawlty-style entanglement with the construction trade currently vies for top slot with Peter Hook's imminent acquisition of a £13-a-week Youth Training "slave" to "make the tea in my studio." Hook, indeed, is loudly discussing the possibilities presented by a weekly investment in these wretches of as little as £100, when the singer finally arrives. He's an altogether less agitated figure than the strings-tangled demento dance-puppet of recent *Top Of The Pops* notoriety.

"Sorry I'm late," he burbles, "but those flippin' builders..."

Chinese chow chewed and glasses suitably recharged, we're attempting to position New Order in rock's swirling firmament.

Substance has irreversibly established them as a Big Deal in America, flushing them, never to return, from their cosy "cult" niche. Yet they're leagues below the mammoth likes of U2 and Bon Jovi, and hairy rawk-wrestlers like Guns N' Roses will this year stampede past them on the trail of global hugeness. So where do New Order see themselves in this ever-shifting platinum pecking-order?

An uneasy silence (punctuated only by Peter Hook's delighted "looks like we're keeping our options open on that one!") mirrors the band's fabled reticence before Barney, habitually the most talkative, sallies forth:

"The gun is in our hand," is his disquieting opening image, "it really depends what we want to do. By touring constantly and doing all the rest of that stuff we could quite possibly end up as awful as U2... No, no," he chortles, "not as awful, as big..."

"If we were prepared to sweat at it, we'd be that big, but personally, I'm not. That would take all the fun out of it; it'd become pure, out and out work... New Order could become this huge machine. I mean, even now getting a record out

has become this big operation, like a turn of some massive cog. In Joy Division, we'd get a song and go 'yeah, let's record this and release it' and it'd be out in a month or summat. But now... we've had six meetings about putting out the new LP. It's this great cumbersome manoeuvre..."

Dearie me! The awful problems of selling millions of records! Barney's line is beginning to sound like poor-little-rich-boy whining when he mercifully alters tack:

"On the other hand, our position is fortunate. We could always be doing jobs that we hate, like so many others, and we've got an ever-better chance to get the music across to a lot of people, especially the straight types who wouldn't ordinarily listen to what you described as a "cult" band. This is particularly true in America. Maybe we can help – Christ, this is going to sound patronising – to educate them a bit, musically...

"...maybe stop them listening to sugar-pop records or whatever. Maybe even," he flashed his best knowingly innocent wicked-pixie grin (the man's a scamp) "show them that music can be a beautiful thing..."

WHEN the Pet Shop Boys recently announced that they were "The Smiths you can dance to", I was measurably gobsmacked. I know that there's only so many slices to be made out of the old rock'n'roll cake, but so keen an awareness of one's rivals, so naked a sense of competition, still shocked. New Order, Barney confirms, are above such vulgarity, refusing to see themselves as pitted against their contemporaries:

"It's definitely an attitude you can take," he shrugs, "but I don't think it's helpful. Besides, I don't listen to many other bands. In fact, I don't listen to any."

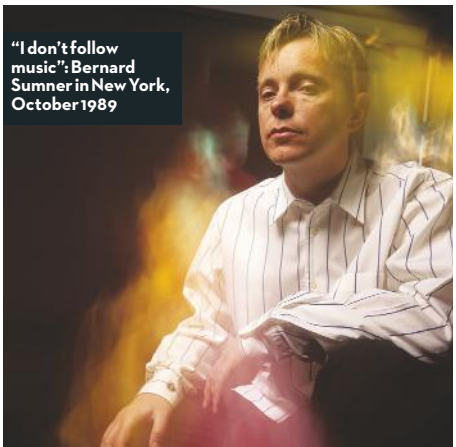
But he does, I insist, hear music other than his own, in clubs especially. New Order own The Haçienda and Sumner's both a regular there and an enthusiastic participant, matey, in Manchester's thriving Acid House scene. He's had us doubled up, in fact, with his talk of a recent acid party, in a 14th floor flat, which was abruptly terminated by the arrival of the local police's specially starved German shepherds. And how had the district's constabulary located this supposedly select do? Oh yeah, the flat's windows had been removed – they just followed the noise and the flashing lights!

Meanwhile, back at other, possible competitive, music Barney hears...

"Oh sure," he nods, "people give me tapes. But I don't follow music... I enjoy it. When I listen to those tapes I'm well... I'm usually out of me box!"

So, if it's not the public school urge to compete and conquer, or the mere necessity of paying quarrelsome builders, just what is it that keeps up their thirst for making music? It's meant to be an easy question, but New Order, not content with the Chinese they've just scoffed, make a meal of it.

"It's the only thing I'm any good at," Peter eventually offers. "Pretty simple, eh?"


"I don't follow music": Bernard Sumner in New York, October 1989

BOB BERG/GETTY IMAGES

"Our position is fortunate": New Order, 1989

"With me," Barney follows, "it's that thing of making a record I can play and be pleased with."

"And there's something very satisfying," muses Stephen, "about ending up with something which you can tangibly feel and say 'yeah, that's good'."

New Order really shouldn't be struggling with this; there's no mystery. They've pumped out a succession of "good", "pleasing" and "satisfying" music, to say the least, and so they've got, built-in, the best reason for carrying on that any band can ever have – their own brilliance...

You'd not expect so flattering a statement to provoke mutiny in the ranks, but Peter Hook's having none of it.

"Our 'brilliance' is just your personal opinion," he growls, "but groups don't release stuff unless they think it's good..."

I want to tell him how idealistic that sounds, and how lazy, talentless and cynical most pop bands are, but there's no stopping him now...

"...I mean, has any musician ever come to you and said, 'my new record is total and utter crap?' No? That's my point – it's all just personal preference. It's like the guy who was trying to sign us for CBS; he genuinely thought that Paul King's solo LP - which had been really badly received and sold about three copies – was the best record he'd ever been involved in, he stood there and told us that straight! He thought it was wonderful..."

"I think another thing that's kept us going," interjects Barney, returning to some long-neglected theme, "and where we're different from other groups, is that we started out knowing precisely fuck all about music. So, we're learning every time we make a record. We didn't start as musicians. And that's a very creative thing.

"I mean, if someone asked me to play a scale in E -minor or something, I wouldn't know what the fuck they were on about, but the point I'm making is that we don't get bored or stale because we don't really know what we're doing, see what I mean? We haven't an established way of writing a song..."

Barney is here returning to some wafer-thin ice over which he first blithely skated in another recent interview. In that (while madly hedging his bets with the old "I-know-this-is-gonna-sound-nutty" get-out) he attempted to convince us that he is some kind of aerial, picking up the vibes from the scattered mass of New Order's faithful. He went on to claim that the music and lyrics he writes, therefore, are nothing less than the collective will of that teeming horde. Something like that.

A distinct cast, I venture, of B(l)arney, and a set of theories about which the human antenna is now being far less forthright:

"Well," he treads carefully, "a lot of the time you really don't know where the music comes from."

"And a lot of the time," announces Peter Hook, rescuing his mate, "you don't care where it comes from! You don't even like discussing it or analysing it; you're just glad that it does come. It just doesn't matter where from.

"Mind you," he beams mischievously, "I'm not being naïve or arty about this. I recognise that this is the only game where someone will ask you 'have you finished that yet?', and you can put your weary head into your hands and whisper 'no, man, I just haven't been able to get the right vibes yet' knowing that they'll probably say 'oh, poor lad, that's alright; you're an artist, I understand...'You can get away from all that, stuff that wouldn't have a hope of washing in the real world."

"Not that we ever do that, mind," Barney hastens to add, "you feel a total c--- if you pull that trick..."

EVEN if we dispense with the comic image of the group's vocalist communing telepathically with gangs of co-writers, New Order, as a working entity, still cut a pretty unusual dash. We're accustomed to seeing our artists (certainly those who want to be taken seriously and get on *The South Bank Show*) display some sense of mission or a hintlet that they're somehow driven. New Order patently fail to demonstrate the slightest sign of either. They are, in fact, for public consumption at least, determinedly lackadaisical.

So how do they work? What ignites the spark? What causes the creative boom?

Another period of silence (contemplative? dumbstruck? bored?) ensues before Barney remembers something: "That creative boom occurs when you're in the studio and it suddenly dawns on you; 'fuckin' hell, we haven't got any time left'!"

This is old ground. Barney's always maintained that his lyrics are a last-minute rush-job, a panic measure, but it's a bit rich to expect us to believe that the rest of New Order's often dazzling finished product relies on that same haphazard swoop of adrenalin, that it's arrived at without some meshing of talent and graft, inspiration and sweat.

"It involves a lot of work," Peter Hook acknowledges, "real hard work."

"And fear helps too," adds a slightly mournful Barney. "I'm terrified of putting out shit. I've said this before, but I thought *Movement* was a really horrible LP. It really did my head in and I swore I wouldn't let it happen again."

Do New Order harbour other regrets about records they've released?

"Yeah," Peter Hook certainly does, "mostly production-wise. I don't think *Movement* is a

LAWRENCE WATSON

"No one can be consistently brilliant": New Order in 1989

LAWRENCE WATSON

bad record because of the songs, but because of the production. You see, there's always this tension between how you envisage your songs and how they actually come out.

"That was the problem with Martin Hannett and the worst example of it was *Unknown Pleasures*, which bothered me a lot more than *Movement*. I had very strong ideas about how it should sound and it ended up completely different from those. Yet everybody thought it was bloody great, which was even more upsetting."

Leaving one bass player with a frustrated, thwarted ache about a record that many were to come to treasure: a sickener.

"Well yeah, sure, except that I don't remember those songs as the 'LP'; I remember them how we used to play them, how we envisaged them. Not how Martin made them come out.

"And it's the same with *Movement* really. I mean, considering the amount of time and work and stress that was involved, I thought the end product was absolutely diabolical...

"Listening to it was like Ian dying all over again..."

THE talk somehow meanders around to the people who are ultimately paying for Barney's vendetta with the builders, the people who part with ready cash for their regular fix of New Order. Fans.

Or, in this case, fanatics, because NO are the very archetype of those bands who attract a following of the distinctly hardcore variety. A touch of strangeness, a hint of bolshiness, a constant stepping of a tightrope between glory and a sore arse, an effortless charisma, and an ability to seem to get it right without trying: New Order have all the qualities that combine to elicit devotion.

So much so, I casually remark, that even if the band were to suddenly start issuing rubbish records, they (like, say, David Bowie for a large chunk of the '80s) would continue to be bought.

Hook, jumping astride a favourite hobby horse, takes umbrage:

"I don't believe," he passionately reiterates, "that people make 'bad' records, only ones that are more obtuse, or whatever, than others. Come on, someone name me a bad record..."

"Lou Reed's *Metal Machine Music*," smiles Barney, playing his joker.

"OK, yeah, that was pretty bad," admits a slightly deflated bassist before regaining his stride, "but there were even people who liked that. Ian Curtis for one. Ian used to really like *Metal Machine Music*! He played it and he listened to it – it was one of his favourite LPs! Everything's liked by someone..."

In a lot of cases, aren't committed fans just being bloody-minded?

"But that kind of fannish disappointment," Stephen Morris takes up the running, "no matter how irrational, is only natural, only human. You mentioned Bowie earlier and he's a case in point. The other day I was listening to *'Heroes'* on the radio and thinking God, that's soddin' brilliant that; how could he end up doing the horrible Glass Spider tour? What went wrong?"

"And yet," jumps in Hook, who really should be appointed defence counsel to all under-attack musicians, "I'm sure that tour was the only one on which he did a lot of songs off *The Man Who Sold The World* LP, so it was worth it for that alone.

"On a crap tour he did songs from what was, and is, by his standards, an underground LP – we all gained something."

Into what has become a rather morbid squabble about the fallibility of our idols, Barney suddenly throws a shaft of solid gold common sense:

"The fact is," he almost whispers, "that no one can be one hundred percent constantly brilliant. You must fuck up sometimes."

That simple statement ought to be tattooed on the hand of every pop musician, should become an article of true faith. Thus would the vast majority of them be spared the regular humiliation of having to pretend that their new record/tour/video/Woolworths PA is the best thing they've ever done, that their creative temperature soars ever higher. And we could relax too, accepting that even our heroes must someday spill egg on their tie.

"I used to believe we had to be incredibly, mega-careful about what we put out," he continues, "absolutely certain about the record. But that just led to my becoming absolutely paranoid about everything, utterly useless. So now I think that you have to just keep on writing and putting it out, even if it's not completely brilliant. You sort of keep your hand in, knowing that some of what you come up with will, eventually, be brilliant again."

Just like that. "Temptation"... "Blue Monday"... "Thieves Like Us"... "Love Vigilantes"... "Perfect Kiss"... "Touched By The Hand Of God"...just like that! The things they don't tell you on *Rockschool*!

> "'BLUE MONDAY' WASN'T A GREAT LEAP FORWARD. IT DIDN'T MAKE A BIG DIFFERENCE TO US"
> PETER HOOK

AS far as this square-eyed addict's research can tell, the most widely-exposed rock music on that most rock-hungry of platforms, television, is that of New Order. Various chunks of it have been used to open motoring programmes and science slots, it's jerked uselessly around behind the test card, and no sequence of BBC sport is now deemed properly attired without its instrumental cloak of NOise. So far, it's backed diving, athletics, rowing, motor sport and, notably, acres and acres of football.

The band, indeed, made a special edit of "Thieves Like Us" – "just the intro looped over and over" – for one Beeb soccer slot, but have exercised little control over the rest of this strange little nether-career. Their response to enforced wedlock to David Coleman varies from Barney's bullish confidence in the music's ability to "stand up for itself" to the slightly more considered reflections of Stephen. The latter, incidentally, enjoys the advantage of actually having seen some of the broadcasts under discussion:

"So far, I think it's all fine. Strangely, all the bits that I've seen have worked. I'd be bothered if they didn't sound right or the whole thing looked daft, but up to now that hasn't been the case. It's quite refreshing to see the music having, y'know, another life..."

Beard scenes: Peter Hook, New York, October 1989

BUT, as so often, the definitive-sounding statement on matters New Order doesn't seem to have been uttered until Peter Hook descends with his tuppence-worth:

"None of this surprises me. The instrumental versions of a lot of our songs are very, very strong, even compared to the same piece with the vocals. With most bands, if you take the vocals off, the music that remains is diabolical. I think that applies very strongly with, for instance, The Smiths' records – take the vocals off and what remains is very ordinary stuff.

"But a lot of New Order's music is absolutely wonderful, though I say so myself; that's why you're getting so many people using it to talk over and so on. There's other bands' music they could use but, I dunno, to me we're the perfect choice."

With exquisite timing, the background muzak is now treating us to a heinous molestation of U2's "Still Haven't Found What I'm Looking For". Would New Order, snickering now, be as chuffed if they found their precious work being used as the ambient floss in lifts, supermarkets and public toilets?

"I suppose," Barney sighs, "that you do have to be very cautious with your music so that it doesn't get cheapened in the way that a lot of classical music has been. The music quickly has no life except that which is associated with Heinz beans or chocolate or drain cleaner or summat. So, yeah, you've got to be really, extremely, careful...

"Unless," he titters from beneath unnaturally raised eyebrows, "they offer you enough money!"

NME | 4/2/89

THIS Order is no longer quite so New. The band have already spanned the coming, and going, of three Soviet presidents, four national newspapers, countless English cricket captains, six Smiths albums and the Sinclair C5.

Across eight-and-a-half years of unremitting flux, one of life's few reliable constants has been Peter Hook's beard. I ask the owner of the familiar fuzz how much New Order – the rest of New Order – has changed in that time?

"I honestly don't know; I'm too close. When you consider the period of time involved – what is it now, ten years? – you think 'bleedin' hell it should have changed a lot', but it hasn't. Not that much anyway."

Yet there's an undeniable chasm between the guitar-fettered undertaker rock of their "Ceremony" debut and the pushbutton dance pulse of last month's "Fine Time". To the outsider that transition was made possible by the quantum leap New Order achieved between the wistful beauty of their third single "Temptation" and the bared-wires brutality of its equally classic successor, "Blue Monday". From inside the process, though, things appear differently.

Peter Hook is shaking his head: "I don't understand that. 'Blue Monday' wasn't a great leap forward. People said that it was, and still do, but it isn't true. Saleswise it was, but it didn't make any big difference to us."

"A lot of people," Barney adds, "said it didn't sound like New Order, which to me was a great confidence boost. It showed we could get out of a rut and do other things that would still be good. It's dead easy to find a way of doing something effectively in life and then stick to it for the rest of your days. But that way you never learn anything, and in the end it suffocates you."

This determination to avoid "suffocation", by resisting familiar routes, is one of New Order's greatest strengths. It's also their biggest weakness, propelling them recklessly along paths that turn out to be sidings, backwaters and cul-de-sacs, places where New Order finish with half-cooked egg on their mush.

The follow-up to "Blue Monday" was a perfect example of one such misadventure. Unfocussed, half-based and cluttered with gratuitous modernity, "Confusion" was slovenly proof of just how fallible they are.

"Yet in a way," Barney recalls "'Confusion' was a very brave move. We could've easily done 'Blue Monday Pt2', 'Blue Tuesday'; instead we did something that was quite experimental.

"We didn't spend enough time on it. We were all sick of New York when we were doing it, all just wanting to get it done and go home. Plus we didn't know Arthur Baker so neither side was aware of the other's work methods. There was a lot of tension.

"At that time we used to play hours and hours of riffs, then pick 30 seconds and make it into a song, whereas he would start with the chorus and title of a song..."

"So he thought," Hook pipes up grinning, "that we'd jam and then pick the best bits and work on them... and we thought we'd jam and he'd select the best bits. So when we presented him with about 12 hours of unedited tape, he nearly had a bleedin' heart attack!"

So did I the first time I clapped ears on the mish-mashed musical muesli that was "Confusion"...

Unreliable though they undoubtedly are, New Order must be doing something right; their career is managing the rare win double of endless critical approval and ever mounting sales. They are that most fortunate of contradictions, the massively popular cult.

But there's a strange side to this too. New Order's combination of maximum grooviosity and floggability has assured them fame, love and money, all the trappings usually associated with acts of their standing.

Except one...

BOB BERG/GETTY IMAGES

"We don't work for the music business": New Order live, circa 1985

I'm certain I'm not imagining this, New Order don't seem to have generated the battalions of imitators you'd expect to find in their slipstream, don't appear to be influential. Why don't ever hear the New Order Sound?

"Oh, I dunno," drawls Hook, "The Cure have had several good goes at it."

Like the *Life Of Brian* zealots conceding the viaducts, I'll accept The Cure as the starter for ten. But who else? The ensuing silence is broken not by a name but by Barney looking on the bright side:

"I think this situation's quite good, though, compared to what happened with Joy Division. I used to get sick of people ripping them off and very sick of people talking about 'Joy Division bands'."

And Stephen Morris can't casually accept that he's drummer with The World's Most Completely Ignored Group:

"Maybe New Order haven't been that influential, but 'Blue Monday' certainly has. You hear it everywhere, in every record Pete Waterman's done since Dead Or Alive for a start. Just the drum sound, just a tiny bit of New Order, but it's on all his records."

AImost too obvious to mention really, but maybe the reason for this apparent dearth of would-be New(er) Orders is that the original is just an exceptionally tough act to imitate. Not in the musical sense (even the Pet Shop Boys can manage that!), but in the way they conduct themselves, what they actually are...

Namely, the completely autonomous, self-contained, auto-reliant creative cell that musicians always start whining about when they've had a few. New Order have made that dream a reality. They can, and do, please themselves.

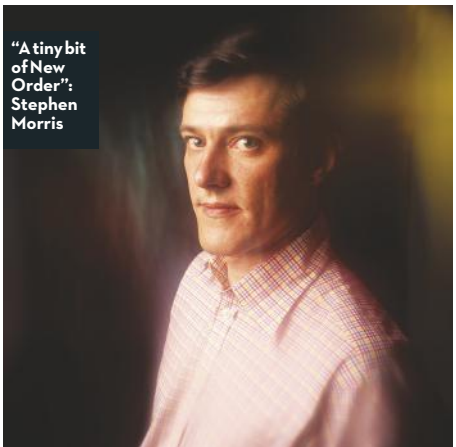
They are hermetically sealed, from the tribulations that beset other bands, by the Factory organisation and their own self-confidence. Their continued residence in Manchester looks like another crucial element in their unique chemistry. And why do they stay? Is it, as every glimpse of Happy Mondays suggests, the quality of the local drugs?

"It's just been a way of staying comfortable," reckons Hook, rudely ignoring my question, "of avoiding upsets, allowing you to get on with what you do. By staying where you know, and where your family is, you just avoid all the upset of moving away. Anyway, it's very artificial to just get up and leave your families behind.

"And there's never been any real need, band-wise, to move. Because we work on a scale peculiar to us, and 'cos we've never really craved massive overnight success, we've always been happy to just get on with it, and Manchester has allowed us to do just that."

Is there also a perfectly understandable hint of snook-cocking in their attitude, a delight in the sheer fact of succeeding away from London?

Peter Hook is adamant: "Nah... I think the whole 'London' thing is vastly overrated, a load of bollocks. That's just the easy way out; to go to the music business..."



"A tiny bit of New Order": Stephen Morris

"And anyway," injects Barney, "we don't work for the 'music business'. We work for Factory, which really means ourselves. That's all meant that we've had it a lot easier than most groups."

"That's definitely true," confirms Hook before hinting at yet another reason why New Order, a law unto themselves, are in a league of their own.

"We haven't had our arses kicked by anyone, ever. There're times when we could probably do with kicking our own arses... But we don't..."

Despite over three decades of frantic procreative activity you can count the great moments spawned by the marriage of Pop and TV on the fingers of very few hands. Hendrix wigging out on *The Lulu Show*... the cocksure Jagger being quizzed by William Rees Mogg... The Who pressing "Destruct" on *Top Of The Pops*... Johnny Rotten (and beer cans) on *Juke Box Jury*...PIL Careering on *Whistle Test*... Tom Jones' leather-armoured libido on *The Last Resort*... a few others. Last month, however, an unforgettable vision was added to that paltry list...

If you missed New Order's "performance" on *Top Of The Pops*, kill to obtain a recording. With good behaviour, you'll only serve seven or eight years – it's easily worth it!

And when you're released, feast your eyes on TV history, a band achieving the impossible by defying the fixed-grin'n'boob tube sterility of that programme and being themselves. Themselves at their very strangest...

Chill to Hooky's arms-folded Genghis Khan stare of inscrutable detachment!... Thrill to Barney's fluorescent sacking clothes and his stoned-bendy-toy Acid dance...

Stare in blank disbelief as he honours the ludicrous growly bits of "Fine Time" with The

TIM HALL/REDFERNS, BOB BERG/GETTY IMAGES

Silliest Mime Ever Seen On *TOTP*!... Catch the nerves, the front, the contempt, the incredulity and the panic.

It was four priceless minutes at that magic place where "pathetic shambles" meets with "creative chaos"; it was 240 seconds of pure undiluted attitude; it was fantastic TV, almost literally.

The band themselves are a little wary of my breathless enthusiasm. Peter Hook frowns knowingly: "Why exactly do you feel we have to talk about that?"

Because it was the best *TOTP* slot ever. People were buzzing about it for days afterwards, still are. Surely you were swamped with feedback?

"OK, I'll admit that people have asked us about it," Hook concedes: "Mostly 'What were you on?'

"Most bands that get on *Top Of The Pops* are giving it the full treatment, the full Nick Heyward number, aren't they? Whereas we, who don't know what we're doing, come across like, well, like people who don't know what they're doing."

Come off it, Peter! You, for one, knew exactly what you were doing; you were being a Rock God! Nothing less! Our very best full-leather-trousers Rock God! The Zodiacs, Eldritches and Husseys of this world cower before you.

"Thanks very much. That's the nicest thing anyone's ever said to me."

Nice nothing! I'm deadly serious.

And Barney, for his part, did a passable impression of a melting mantis as he "danced" in the style previously only risked in public by the parallel life-form that is Happy Mondays' Bez.

"I go out with Bez a lot and, fair enough, I give him full credit for my dancing. He is," concludes the singer, picking his words with commendable care, "a very influential lad."

You had to stop the choreography to do the "love technique" growly bits.

"Growly'? 'Growly'!? I beg your pardon, but I don't do 'growly' – those are the sexy bits! Haven't you ever heard a Barry White LP?"

Peter Hook drags the conversation round before we discover that New Order are Boney M fans.

"It's the risk-taking thing again. People are bound to remember it a lot more if the sound was bad or if you looked pathetic... People say 'New Order? They were fucking diabilocal. Think I'll go and see them."

Not sure about that, but what NO's bizarre telly triangle did seriously highlight was how hopeless and tiny and sad most bands end up looking on *Top Of The Pops*. And how readily they co-operate in their own humiliation.

Peter takes the point and, without a hint of complacency, throws a there-but-for-the-hand-of-God shrug.

"A lot of bands co-operate because they think it's the only way they can survive. We know it's not the only way we'll survive... So it was cool for us to flaunt those rules. A lot of bands, to be fair, have a lot of pressure on them, don't have that choice...

"That's why we pick neutral titles for our LPs..."

New Order are trying hard to stop me reading too much into the title of their new LP (the first non-compilation since *Brotherhood* over two years ago). But "technique" is a far from neutral word; musicians often use it as the opposite of 'emotion'.

"That's just your personal interpretation. The word 'Technique' is not descriptive of the album."

Seen but not heard: Gillian Gilbert

"Technique is just a way of doing things. We've got our way – others have theirs..."

In the techniqual jargon of the journo trade, this interview has arrived at The Difficult Bit. There are many artists who just lurv to talk about their new LP; New Order, given the choice, would opt for primitive dental surgery.

For the first time, I'm made to feel like an outsider, an intruder. My admittedly excited observations on, and enquiries about the LP are being neutralised, either by sudden bouts of speech-loss in the NO ranks or by the straightforward 'no-you're-wrong' theory-terminator. Like I said, these people don't want to talk about *Technique*.

My head, though, is a tumble-dryer of hunches, tip-offs, guesses and questions. *Technique* has got to me, and I must talk about it.

So I've come up with a radical solution to the impasses: I'll tell you now, upfront, that New Order disagree with or deny almost everything put forward below. Then, with that proviso in mind, I'll get on with prattling about the record.

Got that? OK, here goes...

It's hardly a surprise to find lavish praise for New Order in the *NME*, but I'm no kneejerk fan of the band. With their recorded output, indeed, I've been becoming increasingly estranged. *Low-life*, after all, was nearly four years ago, *Brotherhood* was largely rubbish and since 1985's "Thieves Like Us" their singles, with the gorgeous exception of "Touched By The Hand Of God", have been erratically lacklustre.

That said, however, I feel compelled to inform anyone who gives a toss that *Technique*

is a wonderment, less a record than an act of enchantment.

"Fine Time" is the sore thumb isolated in its drab ordinariness by the shimmering beauty that surrounds it. The rest is a remarkably unified swirl of soft yet vigorous melodic rock, crystal sprays of guitar underpinned by That Bass.

Accusations that *Technique* is a retreat into trad rock hold some water, but we're travelling stellar years from the dreary revisionism of *Rattle And Hum*. New Order's patented percussion is still very much present and correct but the mood is often gentle, dappled with melancholy.

Sonically, *Technique* is related to *Low-life*, the polar opposite of *Power Corruption And Lies*. It is, simply, a lovely record.

There's intrigue here too, because *Technique* could in some ways easily pass for Bernard Summer's solo debut.

The incidental fact that he, like Costello and Weller, has become a real singer through sheer practice serves only to highlight lyrics that are afforded a focus in the mix not previously obvious in New Order's work. And those words (for the first time, all by Barney) are more direct and emotionally charged than before as well.

> "I GO OUT WITH BEZ A LOT AND, FAIR ENOUGH, I GIVE HIM FULL CREDIT FOR MY DANCING"
> BERNARD SUMNER

A tentative suggestion that much of the lyrical content reflects on the turbulence in Barney's past that led, some while ago, to separation from his wife, is met with silent shakes of his head.

Are we to believe then, I press on, that lines like "*it takes years to find the nerve to be apart from what you've done /To find the truth inside yourself and not depend on anyone*" (my fave from "All The Way", but there are tons of examples) is devoid of personal significance, something that just came to him while watching *Neighbours*?

After a short eternity, Barney's face splits into a gleeful beam. He's found an answer for me, it's obvious, and it's one with which he's pleased, one which will bring my probing, and his squirming, to a swift conclusion.

From the very pits of his soul he offers: "Let's face it, birds are the driving force..."

Is that it? Is that really how you want a large part of your input into *Technique* (a record that damn near makes me cry) to be viewed?

"Erm... yeah, 'birds are the driving force'... that sounds fine."

Barney's ploy works. My attempts at sixth-form psychology collapse in the cackle of shared laughter. But his studied, defensive casualness cannot change the way I respond to *Technique*. For now at least, it has taken me over. I am full of it.

In a wider context, it will come to be seen, along with its dark reverse side, *Power, Corruption And Lies*, as half of a towering twin testament to New Order's quirky occasional greatness, and will see them safely, vibrantly, into the '90s.

Not bad for a record made in Ibiza, eh?... Not bad for a work motivated by 'birds'... Not bad for a band that's never even had its arse kicked...

BOB BERG/GETTY IMAGES

NEW ORDER

SIDE PROJECTS

Bernard Sumner's surreptitious solo activity sets off a '90s torrent of New Order moonlighting. The result: plentiful hits, and no little acrimony. | *By* **STEPHEN DALTON**

POWER structure within pop groups can take many forms, but harmonious democracy is rarely one of them. As the last decade of bitter splits and bruising court cases has shown, New Order have a volatile internal chemistry. It was ever thus, even back at their late 1980s commercial peak, when frayed friendships, druggy excess and deepening financial problems at their parent label Factory amplified tensions within the band.

Back in 1987 Bernard Sumner began sneaking into New Order's Manchester rehearsal space on Sundays, working long into the night on a secret solo project, before joining official rehearsals on Mondays. But it wasn't until June 1989, on the eve of a massive show at Irvine Meadows arena on the edge of Los Angeles, that he dropped the bombshell. During a crisis meeting about Factory and the Haçienda nightclub he announced that he wanted to put the band on hold to work on other projects. "That gave me the shock of my life," Peter Hook later recalled to biographer Claude Flowers. "I never expected that. I never expected to not have New Order."

> SUMNER'S SOLO PLANS PROVED UNWORKABLE: IT WAS NO FUN BEING IN AN EMPTY WAREHOUSE BESIDE A GRAVEYARD

Sumner's plan to launch his "supergoup" project Electronic was not really the end of New Order, of course. The band would soon regroup in strained circumstances for one more album, *Republic*, released in 1993. But relations between the founder members remained frosty and distant for most of the 1990s. With all four working on side projects.

Sumner's initial solo album plans soon proved unworkable, partly because he had nobody to bounce ideas off in the studio, but also because it was no fun spending one night a week in an empty warehouse adjoining a graveyard. Eventually he invited former Smiths guitarist and fellow Manc-rock icon Johnny Marr, newly-released from Morrissey duties, to join the party. Marr agreed.

Soon afterwards, Peter Hook invited the guitar maestro to join his own nascent side project. Marr explained to the disgruntled bass monster that he was too late. Sumner and Marr wrote a song on their first day of working together, "Reality". They also began sounding out further creative partners, including Specials singer Terry Hall, a meeting that sadly did not bear fruit. But Pet Shop Boys Neil Tennant and Chris Lowe proved keen collaborators, helping to craft Electronic's sumptuous debut single, "Getting Away With It".

"The original concept of Electronic was a nucleus of me and Johnny, and then we would introduce different guest artists," Sumner explained in a 1999 *Uncut* interview. "We were sick of the group format where you have the same people in the same group for years and years. The idea was to come up with a new type of group with two members who stayed the same and two or one member who changed, so you get different chemistry with each album."

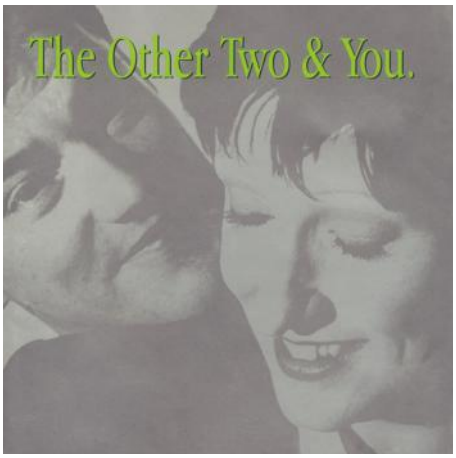
Sumner initially hoped to keep the band as a low-key white-label act, but this underground fantasy was instantly shattered by chart success. Released on Factory in December 1989, "Getting Away With It" hit No 12 in the UK and 38 in the US. Electronic had arrived.

"Whatever we do we are battling our pasts," Sumner told *Uncut*. "Our past doesn't do us any favours, it does us harm. To us, Electronic was a fresh start, but not to other people. We both had our history and our history stuck, and I think that's where the white label thing came from. But it was just wishful thinking."

Climbing to No 8 in April 1991, Electronic's second single "Get The Message" showcased Marr's stately guitar strumming over the duo's synth-pop side. Released a month later, their eponymously titled debut album was widely hailed as a masterpiece. Shot through with clipped funk and sleek house beats, it also contained the magisterial Pet Shop Boys collaboration "The Patience Of A Saint". The album was bookended by Bernard's distinctive "rapping" on "Idiot Country" and "Feel Every Beat", both acerbic attacks on the criminalisation of rave culture.

Electronic scored another gold-plated Number Six smash in 1992 with the sleek one-off single "Disappointed", featuring Neil Tennant on lead vocals. This effectively closed the band's first chapter, freeing Marr to work on The The and Sumner to reactivate the dormant New Order on *Republic*.

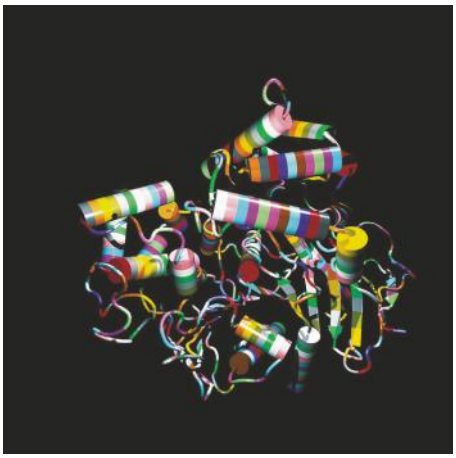
Music for pleasure
monaco


The Other Two & You.

Electronic 01:01:52 Make it happen Haze Vivid Breakdown Can't find my way home Twisted Tenderness Like no other Late at night Prodigal son When she's gone Flicker.

electronic

REVENGE ONE TRUE PASSION



Electronic

monaco

BAD LIEUTENANT
Never Cry Another Tear

THE million-selling *Electronic* album was recorded at the peak of the "Madchester" boom in "completely fucked up" all-night sessions at Marr's home studio. As Sumner later recalled in *Uncut*, he and future Oasis studio engineer Owen Morris "were both waking up in the middle of the night having heart palpitations. Because we were beasting it so much, we were missing heartbeats, which is very disconcerting. You lie there and you feel your heart stop beating for a bit, and I must admit that scared me."

In the five years between *Electronic* and its sequel *Raise The Pressure*, both Sumner and Marr became fathers and began adopting a less hedonistic lifestyle. The motto for their second album was "health and daylight", even though it was recorded in a windowless basement.

"I'd basically not made an album straight since 1977, and I wanted to break the habit of no substances equal no music," Sumner told *Uncut*: "I felt that was dependency and I wanted to be able to write music without depending on external stuff. I wanted to write music straight, which I'd done at the start of Joy Division and the music was pretty good."

Marr and Sumner initially considered Nile Rodgers of Chic to work on *Raise The Pressure*, but that invitation came to nothing. Instead their chief collaborator became Kraftwerk veteran Karl Bartos. A long-time hero of Sumner's from Joy Division days, Bartos spent a year commuting to Manchester and co-wrote six of the album's 13 tracks.

Marr and Sumner were expecting Bartos to be "a robot in a white coat and clipboard". Instead he arrived at the studio, threw a blanket over the computer and announced "we won't be needing this." He was joking, Sumner explained, but not entirely. "Karl was a bit disillusioned because Kraftwerk had got so hung up on using the latest technology and doing something new that they became constipated, in his words."

Released on Parlophone in May 1996, at the peak of Britpop, *Raise The Pressure* lacked the critical and commercial impact of its predecessor. Even so, it charted in the Top Ten while Top 20 singles "Forbidden City" and "For You" contained Marr's lushest guitar-jangling melodies since The Smiths. Sumner also indulged his passion for euphoric Eurodisco with urgent club-friendly tracks like "Second Nature" and "If You've Got Love".

By the time Sumner and Marr regrouped to make the third Electronic album, New Order had patched up their differences and were tentatively working together again. Recorded at Peter Gabriel's Real World studio near Bath, *Twisted Tenderness* was co-produced by long-time New Order cohort Arthur Baker. Featuring Jimi Goodwin of Doves on bass and former Black Grape drummer Ged Lynch, the album includes a sublime electro-heavy title track but otherwise mostly fell into a disappointingly straight, plodding, faceless guitar-rock groove. It has not aged gracefully.

WHEN Sumner first put New Order on hiatus to launch Electronic, Peter Hook's response was to found his own side band, archly titled Revenge. The bass-playing disco-metal Viking insisted the name was not a sly dig at his long-time sparring partner but a reference to the slogan on George Michael's leather jacket in the "Faith" video.

With guitarist and vocalist Dave Hicks and keyboard player Chris Jones on board, the trio began writing and recording at Hook's Suite 16 studios in Rochdale. Revenge's debut single, the stark yet wistful "7 Reasons", arrived on Factory in November 1989, beating Electronic by a month. Their album debut *One True Passion* followed in June 1990. Featuring scantily clad women in vaguely soft-porn poses, the sleeve artwork was pure *Smell The Glove* while song titles like "Surf Nazi" and "Kiss The Chrome" suggested Hook was giving full vent to his lairy, laddish, rock-beast side.

But almost three decades later, most of these muscular techno-rock workouts stand up surprisingly well, from the doleful orchestral disco of "Big Bang" to the tough percussive clatter of "Slave" and the twangy, tender "It's Quiet". Essentially, much of *One True Passion* sounds like mid-1980s New Order after a Belgian New Beat remix.

Hook toured the world with Revenge in 1991, shedding and adding new members along the way, notably David Potts on bass and guitar. After returning to the dysfunctional family of New Order to record and tour their 1993 album *Republic*, Hook intended to reactivate Revenge, but the plan soon fell apart. Instead, he and Potts reformed under a new band identity, Monaco.

Monaco proved a more commercial prospect than Revenge, successfully tapping into the booming Britpop scene with their debut album *Music for Pleasure*, released on Polydor in June 1997. Potts mostly serves as lead singer, but it is Hook who provides gruff lead vocals on the band's biggest hit "What Do You Want From Me?", a driving pop-rock anthem inspired by his break-up with *The Royle Family* creator Caroline Aherne.

Although tracks like "Buzz Gum" and "Happy Jack" fall somewhere between sub-Oasis scally rock and New Order pastiche, Monaco's debut album sold over half a million copies and peaked at No 11 in Britain.

However, the duo barely even charted three years later with their self-titled sequel album, released on the indie label Papillon. The broad musical range here is impressive, from the croon-pop serenade "Ballroom" to gnarly disco-rocker "See Saw". But the nagging sense that Hook is playing in a New Order tribute band is still impossible to ignore.

WITH Sumner and Hook both pursuing projects outside New Order, it was perhaps inevitable that Gillian Gilbert and Stephen Morris would hatch their own extracurricular plans. The duo had already established a successful sideline in TV soundtrack work, Indeed, their theme to BBC2's news show *Reportage* formed the basis to New Order's chart-topping 1990 football anthem "World in Motion".

Besides stockpiling composition for potential TV work, the duo were already writing material for a tentatively planned New Order reunion in 1990. When that failed to happen, they began work on a stand-alone electro-pop project at their home studio outside Macclesfield. "Why bother making a record on our own?" Morris mused to *NME* in 1991. "Because no one else turned up, I suppose."

Initially the duo mooted recruiting famous pop singers, but negotiations with Alison Moyet and Kim Wilde came to nothing. Frequent New Order producer Stephen Hague offered help in the studio, and advised Morris to take singing lessons. But it was Gilbert who finally ended up supplying the dreamy lead vocals on the duo's debut single, the gleaming dance-pop gem "Tasty Fish", released on Factory in October

CRITICS' VERDICTS

ELECTRONIC

"*Electronic* is simply a 100 per cent pure distillation of Marr and Sumner's respective talents. it breaks no new ground; it simply achieves perfection."
KEITH CAMERON, VOX, 1991

"With *Electronic*, pop music is once again in the hands of people with guitars, synthesisers and tunes."
DAVID QUANTICK, NME, MAY 21, 1991

REVENGE

"The S&M-lite artwork and repulsive song titles – 'Surf Nazi', 'Fag Hag', 'Kiss The Chrome' – enhanced the perception of Hook peddling a chauvinist ideology and macho metal bluster."
UNCUT, 2004

Peter Hook with Revenge, Chicago, 1990

The Other Two, London, 1993

PAUL NATKIN/GETTY IMAGES, DAVID TONGE/GETTY IMAGES

Bernard Sumner with Johnny Marr in Electronic, 1999

1991 under the wry band name The Other Two. "Don't look for too much irony in the name," Morris told *NME*. "We're crap at names, and it was getting late."

Scheduled as a Factory release just before the label imploded, the first The Other Two album was further delayed by the recording of New Order's *Republic*. Finally released on the London label in November 1993, *The Other Two and You* is all sleek, shiny, light-headed dance-pop, rich in Italo-house piano motifs and tinselly electro lullabies. Gilbert's woozy helium voice is a strong selling point on standout tracks like "Innocence", "Selfish" and "Moving On", with their swooning echoes of St Etienne and Dubstar. Though a little anodyne in places, these bittersweet synth-pop baubles still radiate freshness and charm more than 25 years later.

The Other Two and You was not a commercial smash, so Morris and Gilbert put plans for a second album on hold. They married in 1994, became parents to two daughters and concentrated on TV music for much of the Nineties. They finally relaunched their pop side project in 1999 with the *Super Highways* album, which was more stylistically diverse but also more unfocussed than its predecessor. Sub Sub singer Melanie Williams co-writes and provides belting vocals on a clutch of fairly indifferent rave-pop tracks, but elsewhere the album covers a wide musical spectrum. The Aphex-ish ambitronica of "Topic", the orchestral power ballad "The River" and Bjork-ish avant-pop confection "Weird Woman" are all worth revisiting.

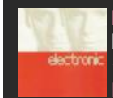
> BAD LIEUTENANT FORMED AS MORRIS AND SUMNER BATTLED HOOK FOR THE NEW ORDER NAME

THE first wave of New Order solo projects emerged when the post-punk legends were at their commercial and creative peak, the free-spirited Factory Records was still a cultural force, and Manchester still the molten centre of a dance-rock revolution. Two decades later, following Peter Hook's acrimonious departure, a fresh wave of side projects emerged including Hook's short-lived Freebass collective and his current band The Light, who tour the world playing live versions of classic Joy Division and New Order albums. In July 2019, Hook debuted the first new Monaco song in almost 20 years, the roaringly romantic "Higher, Higher, Higher Love".

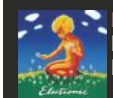
But perhaps the most noteworthy New Order spin-off of the past decade has been Bad Lieutenant, the flag of convenience that Sumner and Morris were forced to adopt as they battled Hook for legal tenure of their old band name. Given their fraught origins, it comes as little surprise that this Tin Machine-style outfit only produced one album of flat, conservative, guitar-heavy rock, *Never Cry Another Tear* in 2009. But at least the expanded line-up of Bad Lieutenant, with Phil Cunningham on guitar and Tom Chapman on bass, would go on to shape New Order's triumphant post-Hook rebirth with their *Music Complete* album in 2015.

It's a circuitous journey. But New Order's promiscuous alternative history is still peppered with wild detours, fascinating dead ends and a handful of glorious pop peaks.

TRACK MARKS

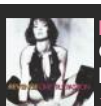


ELECTRONIC
Electronic
★★★★
Label: Factory/Virgin/Warner, 1991
Produced by: Bernard Sumner, Johnny Marr
Recorded at: Clear Studios. Manchester
Highest chart position: UK 2; US 109

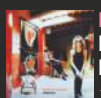


ELECTRONIC
Raise The Pressure
★★★
Label: Parlophone/ Virgin/Warner, 1996
Produced by: Bernard Sumner, Johnny Marr
Recorded at: Clear Studios, Manchester
Highest chart position: UK 8; US 143

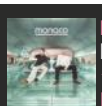
ELECTRONIC
Twisted Tenderness
★★★
Label: Parlophone, 1999
Produced by: Bernard Sumner, Johnny Marr, Arthur Baker
Recorded at: Real World
Highest chart position: UK 9; US –



REVENGE
One True Passion
★★
Label: Factory, 1990
Produced by: Peter Hook
Recorded at: Suite 16
Highest chart position: UK – US –



MONACO
Music For Pleasure
★★★
Label: Polydor, 1997
Produced by: Peter Hook, David Potts
Recorded at: Suite 16
Highest chart position: UK 11; US –



MONACO
Monaco
★★★
Label: Papillon, Chrysalis, 2000
Produced by: Peter Hook, David Potts
Recorded at: Suite 16
Highest chart position: UK 84; US –

THE OTHER TWO
The Other Two and You
★★★
Label: London/ Qwest, 1993
Produced by: Gillian Gilbert, Stephen Morris, Stephen Hague
Recorded at: Higher Plane Studios, Mayfair Studios, Real World
Highest chart position: UK – ; US –

THE OTHER TWO
Super Highways
★★★
Label: London/East West, 1999
Produced by: Gillian Gilbert, Stephen Morris, Tim Oliver
Recorded at: Higher Plane Studios, The Wool Hall
Highest chart position: UK – ; US –

BAD LIEUTENANT
Never Cry Another Tear ★★
Label: Triple Echo, 2009
Produced by: Bernard Sumner, Bad Lieutenant
Recorded at: Various studios
Highest chart position: UK 70; US –

PATRICK FORD/REDFERNS

Barney with "Rapping" John Barnes, 1990

"AT THE END OF THE DAY, WE'RE OVER THE MOON..."

With split rumours circling and touring proving unhealthy, New Order do the sensible thing – don Elvis suits and sing for Eng-er-land. 'Rapping' John Barnes joins them for "World In Motion", the best World Cup song ever recorded. How did the band update the footy song tradition for the dance age? "It started when we recorded *Technique* in Ibiza," Bernard tells **STUART MACONIE**. "Dancing is this century's version of prayer..."

KEVIN CUMMINS/GETTY IMAGES

NME 19/5/90

THURSDAY MAY 3, 1990. The hottest day of the year and, through the shimmering haze rising from the tarmac at the car park of Liverpool FC's training ground, a tableau of quite uncompromising weirdness is being acted out before our disbelieving eyes.

While the football phenomenon that is John Barnes juggles a ball quietly and expertly in an unnoticed comer of the ground, a man in a vulgar and slightly off-colour facsimile of the kind of outfit Elvis wore at his Vegas shows in the early '70s is clambering upon the bonnet of a Mercedes convertible and thrusting his hips in time to a rather fine example of Disco Techno pop.

A strange vignette... but stranger things are yet afoot. For now that this odd cove has discarded the rather ratty thatch of an Elvis wig, we can see that... surely not? Can this really be Bernard 'Barney' Sumner of top disco situationists New Order? Indeed it is, and as Barney 'takes five' from his endeavours, he mutters cryptically to no-one in particular "This should be the last straw for the Joy Division fans!"

All, as they say, will be explained... albeit in a rather oblique and unsatisfactory manner with somewhat scant attention to the Elvis costume, but stay tuned anyway. Our story begins with some enterprising record company folk and a football team in desperate need of a good song.

As you may know, the English national football squad, thanks to that oddly lovable blend of lumbering stoicism and sporadic brilliance, have qualified for the World Cup Finals in Italy in some two weeks time. For the shebangs it is customary for the 'lads' to record an ersatz pop ditty as a kind of war cry-cum-souvenir. Needless to say, this is invariably excruciating pap of the worst philistinism, a piss-poor excuse for a song bellowed by men not known for their aesthetic bent. Immediately the elephantine strains of 1970's "Back Home" comes to mind or the grovelling and apologetic "This Time We'll Get It Right" from 1982. The last such song was produced and written by Stock, Aitken and Waterman for 1988's Euro championships. With ruthless logic, it was shite, no-one bought it and England were dumped out of the competition by Lapland 'B'. England's official song for the 1990 World Cup is "World In Motion" aka 'E For England' and is, without doubt, the best pop record ever to be connected with football; perhaps the first such song that you can carry out of Our Price without self-combusting with embarrassment.

How did this come about?

Apparently via the good sense of an MCA records official who, mindful of our poor showings in this department in the past, and having heard "Best & Marsh", New Order's theme for a Granada TV football show, approached Tony Wilson with this curious offer. Curious in the sense that of all the bands in the country, few would have sprung less readily to mind than New Order. The Wedding Present, Snuff, Birdland, any of these purveyors of gung-ho populist thrash would have been more obvious men for the job than Manchester's dance theoreticians with their dispassionate allure and obsidian surfaces.

But the result is faultless and a lot of fun. New Order devotees fearing some hideous oompah workout featuring Gascoigne, Beardsley, Shilts et al mumbling their way through some guff about 'doing it for the folks in Cleckheaton' can breathe again. "World In Motion" is pure New Order; an unstoppable, synthetic groove with the odd concession to the terrace viz snatches of Kenneth Wolstenholme ("Some people are on the pitch, they think it's all over... it is now,") and a lyric, courtesy of 'comedian' Keith Allen which manages to allude to the noble game without descending to cliché. An (ahem) 'Equity Culture' anthem espousing a more positive vibe for the beer boys? Something like that. The heart is worn pretty blatantly on the sleeve. *"This is no football song/ We ain't no hooligans"* goes the rap section, though this may be the line that potato-skinned stormtroopers in Union Jack boxer shorts omit as they vomit in the back of Luigi's taxi and make 'witty' sexual suggestions at elderly señoras in the Sardinian streets.

WE ARRIVE at Liverpool's suburban training ground where New Order and John Barnes are filming their segment of the video to be met by a worrying sight. Tony Wilson and Peter Hook, men of some repute, I think you will agree, amble around looking frighteningly like extras from *Neighbours* in their sloppy joe tops and voluminous shorts.

Being of the opinion that shorts are strictly for the under-10s and, more to the point, having useless legs, I sit on the touch sweltering in my winter togs and muttering darkly about 'standards' under my breath. Lyricist Allen is showing his near-Brazilian range of ball juggling skills whilst John Barnes commits the song's rap to memory off huge idiot boards.

Steve and Gillian loll in the sunshine, sporadically egged into life by Wilson. ("Get on this fucking video, Steve. You're the best bloody dancer in the band!") Hooky is in good spirits; learning that I am from Wigan he proceeds to make gratuitous, disparaging remarks about this all afternoon. Allen's delight at receiving a fat publishing cheque for the song's lyrics also prompts some derision from Hook.

"Now he's found out there's some money in it, he's after writing one for the darts team, the hockey team, bloody anybody!"

Barnes is working to a tight deadline, ie, he should have been somewhere else an hour ago but is still doing his best to fit in sundry, unconnected requests.

"Why don't you ask me some questions while I'm juggling the football, doing the rap and making the video?" OK, are you a New Order fan, then John? "Well, I certainly am now," he replies diplomatically. So what sort of stuff do you normally listen to?"

"Soul," he answers controversially. "I have a lot of friends who are DJs." And were you suffused with excitement at the prospect of doing another football song? "Man, I thought if it was going to be the same as the usual crap, why bother? But this is all right." And pausing only to sign an England shirt for Barney's young son, he was gone, leaving the female contingent of our party, raving, rather pathetically I thought, about his legs.

Spying Steve and Gillian at a loose end (or, more accurately, being forced into doing some work by the jibes of Hook and Cummins) I amble over for a quick interviewette. When you first heard about all this did you assume it was a joke? "Oh yeah. But when it became apparent that it was a serious offer we thought, why not? You see we had a choice of two things; Doing this football song or working with the film director Michael Powell. He was going to make a short film and then we were going to write some music around it. Like a video in reverse. And we thought, that's quite nice, quite arty, you know? But in the end we decided to do this. And on the first morning in the studio we got a phone call saying that Michael Powell was dead. So we made the right decision really. We'd have looked like proper charlies working with a dead director!"

New Order and the England squad: *"This is no football song/We ain't no hooligans"*

New Order, May 5, 1990: (l-r) Gillian Gilbert, Stephen Morris, Bernard Sumner, Peter Hook and Keith Allen

Does it bother you that the song is going to end up being sung by some fat, bald, tattooed, *Sun*-reading bastard as he trashes some Sardinian bar? "Well, if that happens, it's out of our hands really. We have taken some pains to distance ourselves from that in the song. It's got a really positive message. In fact, the FA came to us and said, 'What's all this love's got the world in motion stuff? You can't sing that! It's got to be we've got the world in motion' and we just said no."

At this point Mr Hook takes an interest in our conversation "Oi, interview me, you Wigan bastard!" Fair enough, seeing as you put it like that. So, tell me Peter, at the end of the day, do you think that you lads done brilliant for the boss?

"Oh aye. We struggled a bit with injuries, like. Brain, spinal cord, nervous system, you know that sort of thing, but at the end of the day were over the moon."

And is this the best football song ever?

"I dunno. 'Best & Marsh' was pretty good. You see, no-one's ever tried to make a decent song that's got lasting qualities. They usually do them on the cheap and... FUCKIN' 'ELL IT'S ELVIS."

The cause of this interruption is walking towards us from the clubhouse. It is Barney, thoughtful and enigmatic vocalist, strolling along resplendent in full 'bonkers' period Elvis regalia complete with daft wig, huge rhinestone cummerbund, 'interesting' lapels and red snakeskin boots. The effect is rather arresting. It could certainly get you arrested. The football connection is a little oblique but everyone agrees that this should clearly be preserved on film for posterity. Barney himself seems to be having second thoughts.

"This costume feels funny. You can tell that someone really horrible has worn this recently."

With video crew in tow, Barney the King sets off for Anfield in his Merc convertible. All along the route housewives gawp slackjawed and scouse children walk into lampposts. Upon arrival, Barney thinks it might be a neat idea to get some scally kids in the back of the car. Until that is, it occurs to him that the police might take a dim view of a man dressed as Elvis luring small boys into his sports car. Instead Barney suggests we sojourn to a Lime Street buffet bar for a chat. And so, over fish burgers and sweet Martinis, Barney reveals how a year that began with him sick as a parrot ends with him over the moon.

> "I ENDED UP IN HOSPITAL WITH TV CAMERAS SHOVED DOWN MY STOMACH. I WAS REALLY ILL"
> BERNARD SUMNER

FIRST, LETS start with the concept of New Order getting involved with the England World Cup Squad song which is, on the face of it, an extraordinary notion. Are you pleased with it?

"Oh yeah. Personally, I think the mix could have been a little better but there you go. It's mainly been written by Gillian which I think might be the way of the future. I think a lot of people assumed it was a joke but I didn't see it that way. The thing is we wanted to do a single anyway so I thought it was a good idea. I thought we'd do a good job. And we have. It's definitely the very best football song ever. What do you think? Mind you, there was those Chas & Dave ones."

Were you very aware that English football still has a pretty unsavoury streak running through?

"At one stage, the FA came to us and made it clear that the song had to really distance itself from hooliganism. Hence *'Love's got the world in motion'*. It's an anti-hooligan song. There's a deliberate ambiguity about the words which don't have to refer to football. I think you're right when you say that pop and football culture are nearer than they have been in years. And from our point of view, there's been a football element in our fans for about the last six years. I really couldn't write a football lyric... so we got Keith (Allen) to do it."

Whatever the subject matter, the very appearance of new product from New Order might go some way towards silencing the rumours that have abounded these past 12 months.

"The rumours don't really affect us but... There has been a tension in the group, that is true. We did a three-month US tour and by the end of it we were all sick of New Order. It was a massive tour – 36 nights of 20,000 seater venues. And it made me ill. I ended up in hospital with television cameras shoved down my stomach. I was really ill. And the doctor said that I had to give up the drink for two weeks. That's like asking Bob Marley to go without his dope! So, I was going out facing 20,000 people without a drink, feeling sick all the time, and I just thought, 'I don't want to be here. Why am I doing this?'

"There was no temptation to pack the group in. I just wanted to be at home. We didn't want to play Reading but we were contracted to do so and I'm glad now because we really enjoyed it. But

KEVIN CUMMINS/GETTY IMAGES

"World In Motion": March 25, 1990

as for the American tour... we did it to see if we could handle a mega-tour. And, to be frank, we couldn't."

Are you saying that the 'New Order to split' stories simply passed you by?

"No. Rumours do bother me and you're all guilty of it. You print things in the hope that we'll deny it. If New Order were going to split up, I'd tell you. But it annoys me when people talk about what they don't know. It's not just me throwing tantrums or being a prima donna. It goes deeper than that.

"When I was ill, getting worse and worse, throwing up 11 hours a day and trying to convince people that wasn't just a hangover, I thought 'What the fucking hell am I doing with my life? This isn't what I want to do.' And I realised that all I wanted to do is write songs. So the football song is a good way of having some New Order material around right now. I've been very busy with Electronic, my solo project with Johnny and the Pet Shop Boys. We should have an LP out in August and then after that it's straight into the new New Order album in September.

"Really, New Order needed a break. We've been together since Joy Division days, we've written dozens and dozens of songs together, we needed some time off. I know this sounds like marriage guidance stuff but the Bunnymen didn't get through it. And now I'm enjoying life. I've got the financial security to do what I like and not be treated as someone else's luggage."

Explain to us the rationale behind 'Electronic'. What's its current state? What does it mean to you?

"Electronic has been really good for me. It's been really good to work with other musicians. You see, New Order is so close-knit that we won't allow anyone else to be involved with the records. But next week with Electronic, I'm working with Johnny and both Pet Shop Boys and I can really benefit from that. I just want to get better at writing songs. I'm still not good enough."

Does it rile you when Electronic, like Peter's Revenge, are described as your 'hobby' band?

"They know it's not true. It's just intended as a dig. It's a pretty fucking successful hobby then, innit?! I can't comment on Peter and Revenge but for me it's just the desire to work with other musicians after 10 years of New Order. The basis of it is Johnny (Marr) and I as a duo... well, no, it's a project under whose name I can work with anyone and Johnny can do the same. And that freedom, that flexibility is cool.

"Neil got involved by phoning me up. I'm a friend of the guy who does the Pet Shop Boys' sleeves. Through him, Neil must have found out that I was making a solo record and he phoned me up to ask if he could be on it. Corny though it may sound I was really pleased 'cos I've always been a big fan of the Pet Shop Boys though I've never told Neil this. So Johnny and I had written the music to 'Getting Away With It' and Neil helped out with the lyrics and vocals. Now Johnny, Neil and Chris Lowe have a tune called 'The Patience Of A Saint' which we'll be recording in London next month."

I think the permanence or otherwise of the venture has had some people, like myself, a little confused.

"Well, the intention was to record an album first, not a single. But when we'd finished 'Getting Away With It' it was such an obvious single that we had to put it out. Another frustration of New Order is the inability to get things out that you've just written. With Electronic we did just that. That song was out within a month of being written. There was never a definite time span for the group but after finding that what we've done is so good, we're bound to continue. It's been nice to get on so well with Johnny, musically and socially. We've shied away from publicity because we wanted to wait until the album. There's not a lot to say about a single is there? We'll do interviews when the album appears."

What about live performances?

"Oh, I should think so. There'll be no tours for sure but there's no reason why we shouldn't play a few big dates in major cities. But I've had it with touring. The most I'd be prepared to do is about five concerts and I don't really want to think about that. Basically, I'd rather be on the dole than go on tour again."

One expects "World in Motion" to be well received a) because it's brilliant but b) because New Order are icy cool; the band who can do no wrong.

"Oh yeah, I'm aware of that. But I believe it's because we aren't static. We change with the times. And we genuinely are good. Well, not all the time but 70 or 80 percent of the time. The punters get what they pay for. We did get a backlash straight after Joy Division and that hurt a bit because we weren't very good at that stage. And we got that right up until 'Blue Monday'. That shut 'em up."

In a round up of the '80s I described "Blue Monday" and "This Charming Man" as the most important white records of the decade. Would you agree with that?

"Err... yes, I think you're probably right. At that time I was listening to Giorgio Moroder and I thought, 'This is good, this is new.' And I could hear a lot of good in it. I could hear a lot of bad too but it was different. It's like Hooky told me at school about horizontal and vertical thought. Sometimes you have to look in the opposite direction from everyone else."

TRINITY MIRROR/MIRRORPIX/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

With "Blue Monday" and subsequent releases, New Order had the vision to learn from dancefloor culture at a time when white rock in Britain was foundering in the pathetic, sixth form slough of goth. Without New Order (and likeminded bands such as Depeche Mode) there would have been no house music. How does this make you view the current infatuation with dance?

"Well, I remember the letters we got when we released 'Blue Monday'. 'How could you do it? It's just another disco record!' Or the one that gives me particular pleasure said, 'It just doesn't sound like New Order.' Which is ironic because these days it sounds very much like New Order.

"Speaking for myself but not for the rest of the band, dance is the most interesting musical form of the past 10 years. Ninety percent of rock is archaic while roughly the same percentage of dance music is wonderful. I appreciate some of our fans probably regard us as a rock band and some of what we do could be classed as rock but there isn't much good stuff in that line left. The Smiths were the last great rock band."

Do you think there has been a dance revolution?

"Oh yes, and it started when we recorded *Technique* in Ibiza! It's changed my social habits completely. It's got across to your student types who previously had this prejudice that dance was only for scallies and Perries. In some ways it's got too big. It's hard to have a party or a rave or whatever you want to call it now 'cos there's so many stiffs involved. People who think that doing gallons of drugs is cool. It's not. Or at least shouting about it isn't.

"Some really positive things have come out of the dance boom. Like the clubs have virtually eliminated violence. I started going to clubs when I was 16 and when I were a lad in Salford you'd see two fights a night, no problem. Now I might see one a month, if that. Plus you go to clubs now and it's genuinely multi-racial. Why can't the police concentrate on that and ignore the odd dickhead shouting his mouth off about drugs? If the police continue as they are now, clamping down on kids and hassling them for no good reason the frustration will lead to riots again."

So are you a rock band or a dance band?

"Well, dance music has been a massive influence but we would never go totally over to pure dance. For one thing, nobody fuckin' buys it! I mean, you hear it at clubs and you get tapes off your mates don't you? Last Saturday night I went to a party and I had a great time but couldn't tell you the name of one record I heard!

"But I do have this theory that dancing is this century's version of prayer. I think people have a real need to come together in large groups. And there's a definite buzz about being part of a thousand people all dancing. I think they used to get that from churches."

Do you think this partial embracing of the house/club ethic means that you've finally shaken that 'depressing' tag?

"Maybe some of the songs were a bit depressing. When they're coming to me it's as if someone else is writing them, as if I'm being told a story. Musically, that is. Lyrically, they're a joke. Why? Because I don't take the writing of lyrics very seriously. OK, occasionally I might do but in general I can't muster the effort. I'm very proud of 'All Day Long' but I couldn't be that heavy all the time. I like a laugh, you know. We've just never taken the trouble to deny that 'depressing' tag. Any band who tries to be serious gets called that because people are shallow. Morrissey gets it because he tries to be different. But to be honest, we're like the Mondays in that we don't give a fuck what people think of us. We joined a band so we could get away from having to answer to bosses just like they joined a band so they could party 24 hours a day."

> "WHAT MYSTIQUE? THERE'S NO MYSTIQUE FROM WHERE I'M STANDING"
> BERNARD SUMNER

If you really couldn't give a fuck what people think, how come you've got one of the most rigorously defined images and identities of any band; that beautifully sustained mystique?

"You see, I don't understand this. What mystique? There's no mystique from where I'm standing. Are you sure this 'mystique' is not just because we've been around for so long and never made it big?"

But from the record sleeves to the merchandising, are you telling me that there isn't a clearly defined image?

"Yeah, and once I was very into it. But as you just don't have the time to work out ideas for videos and the like, it ends up with someone asking you to approve album sleeves while you're sitting on a plane to Brazil or something. You end up losing control. Electronic will not be like that. One of the great things about it is it's getting away from the corporate rock idea.

"You accuse us of perversity but a lot of things aren't my idea. I didn't know New Order didn't mime until I read it in the *NME*. And this business of not having our pictures on the sleeve. I go to America and they go (adopts American drawl) 'Hey, Bernard Sumner...' and I'm expected to justify not having band shots on the sleeve. And I don't fucking know why. It's not my idea. Ask Peter Saville. All I know is that he didn't ask me."

So there's no masterplan?

"The opposite. We've done a lot of stupid, very New Order things that have held us back. We're mega-cockrock big in the States now and we could have been years ago if we hadn't done so many 'New Order' things like played small clubs which we thought was cool, when we should have been playing big gigs. Playing live on *Top Of The Pops* is very 'New Order' and very stupid. You have six minutes to recreate a sound that took weeks in the studio. You sound crap, you should mime but 'Oh no, we're New Order.' I tell you, I wouldn't be working so hard now if I hadn't done so many 'New Order' things in the past."

But are you proud of your achievements, having been in not one but two legendary bands?

"Yes, I'm very proud. Not many bands would have overcome the blow of their lead singer... (pause) going. After 10 years we still make great records. Which is more than The Who or The Kinks could ever say. But it's funny. In America, Joy Division mean nothing. We'd played the Irvine Meadows amphitheatre and it had gone great so we played 'Love Will Tear Us Apart' as an encore... and you could see 'em turning to each other going what the fuck's this?"

If you hadn't joined Joy Division, where would you be now?

"On the roof of Strangeways probably. I'd have given up any steady job and turned to something illegal... but not hurting anyone."

Do you reckon you could have a No 1 with "World In Motion"?

"Fuckin' 'ell, don't ask me. I say every one's going to be No 1."

And what's the stupidest thing anyone's ever said about you?

"That the cover of 'Love Will Tear Us Apart' was a gravestone and we were cashing in on Ian's death... oh, and when the Burchill said that my lyrics to 'Ceremony' were trite after Ian's... which is good 'cos Ian wrote them (pause)... but what do you think of the Elvis suit then? I was on a plane coming back from Crete and I couldn't sleep and the idea just came to me, I had to dress as Elvis for this video. Maybe the great man himself put the idea there. I wouldn't mind but I fuckin' hate Elvis, actually."

Winging it: Beardsley and Barnes take the vocals

TRINITY MIRROR/MIRRORPIX/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

NEW ORDER

REPUBLIC

Regrets? They have a few, smattered across the pages of this open-diary break-up record. End of part two. | *By* **JASON ANDERSON**

NEW ORDER usually did a bang-up job of keeping their darkest matters out of public view. Since the exhilarating rush of the likes of "True Faith" obscured the many varieties of turmoil that blighted the band, it wasn't until the publication of acrimonious memoirs by Bernard Sumner and Peter Hook that it became clear just how dire things had got beneath the surface. However divergent their accounts, all parties agree the period of *Republic*'s creation was an especially gruelling and unhappy one, and that discord is uncharacteristically palpable in the finished work. Whether its contents are as brightly melodic and strident as "Regret" or as perfunctory as "Special", *Republic* is laced with bitter sentiments and references to woes and burdens that would've killed off any other band. The fiery conflagration that fills the left side of Peter Saville's California-inspired cover design – the first he made for a New Order album after actually hearing the contents – feels apt.

"It was just a very, very unpleasant record to make," Stephen Morris told Noisey in a personal survey of his group's albums (in which he placed this, the final one to top the UK charts, last). Hook's recollections in *Substance: Inside New Order* are equally fraught, though tinged with poignancy due to the spark he hears in "Regret", one of the few songs that survived from the onset of the arduous process. It's also the last song in New Order's history he considers to be "a genuine collaboration". Beyond that, his take on *Republic* is steeped in the frustration he felt at watching what began as a New Order album slowly become "an Electronic one".

To be fair, Sumner didn't want to make a New Order album at all. But early in 1991, the band realised that unless they made new music, then the financial calamities at Factory and the Haçienda would see them wiped out by debts and liabilities. Even though "World In Motion" had been a very successful one-off the year before, Sumner, Hook, Morris and Gillian Gilbert were far happier pursuing their own projects than coping with the stress-induced headache New Order had become.

Sumner was also mourning the loss of his mother, the year's second significant death after Martin Hannett's heart gave out in April. The singer was absent when the other three convened at Morris and Gilbert's house in August to develop ideas. The band's camaraderie there made the later frustrations all the more painful as work shifted to Real World Studios, the flow slowed and the bills piled up. The album's eventual cost: £400,000.

Though he was the first outside producer officially credited on a New Order album, Stephen Hague had previously teamed with the four on "True Faith" and "1963" plus debut efforts by Electronic and The Other Two. Here, he became the middle-man who communicated Sumner's requests for revisions as his bandmates' original ideas were reworked beyond recognition or ditched altogether. "I didn't think some of the material was quite strong enough," Sumner explains in *Chapter & Verse*.

Yet the sole New Order classic that somehow emerged from these trying times proved the old chemistry wasn't entirely gone. "Regret" benefits from being an obvious band effort, one whose varied components are galvanised (as they were on so many songs) by the melody line Hook provides with his bass. Listless elsewhere on *Republic*, Sumner's vocal performance is entirely on point, as are lyrics yearning for a fresh start, like anyone who's spent too much of their life heading down dead ends and blind alleys. Likewise, the thrill of finding new love late in the game may have never been more simply or more movingly expressed than when he sings, *"You were a complete stranger/Now you are mine."*

CRITICS' VERDICTS

"I'm disappointed to impart that *Republic* has few of the extremes of euphoria and elegia which characterised *Low-life* and *Brotherhood*."
SIMON PRICE, MELODY MAKER MAY 1, 1993

"A shower of sparks, some sprinkling of dust, a flurry of snow, a stiff breeze and New Order return near triumphant after four years in the superstar wilderness."
DELE FADELE, NME, MAY 1, 1993

Republic continues its winning streak with "World", an appealing cousin to *Technique*'s "Run". Again, Sumner conveys an uncustomary enthusiasm as he claims his space amid a nimble electro-funk rhythm, crystalline piano chords and backup vocalist Dee Lewis's refrain of *"That's the price of love!"*

It's with "Ruined In A Day" that Sumner shifts into default Electronic mode. Set to what sounds like an oddly enervated "Funky Drummer" sample, it strives for elegiac but merely seems thin. Though "Spooky" features a quickening of pace, it's not helped by a tendency to bury Hook's bass deep in the mix. Interlaced with such deftness on *Power, Corruption & Lies* and *Low-life*, the synths mostly end up mushed together in an over-compressed middle.

As the grasp on quality control loosens on *Republic*'s remainder, Sumner's sour attitude about the state of affairs is unusually clear. In "Everyone Everywhere" – a song whose Electronic-ness is accentuated by a Johnny Marr-like guitar riff – lines like *"at the end of the day there's no food on our plate"* reflect his pique over pouring tour earnings into the Haçienda debacle. The shimmering Balearic trappings of "Young Offender" and "Liar" are undermined by the traces of bitterness most evident in the latter's lyrics, which Sumner directed at Rob Gretton, at least according to Hook. *"Were you abandoned in your youth?"* goes one putdown, *"because if not you will be soon."* "Chemical" replaces the euphoric vibe of *Technique*'s "Fine Time" with something more akin to cocaine-induced exasperation thanks to its grinding rhythm and anxious air. *"And this is how it feels to be on the payroll company,"* Sumner spits, *"your every scene is in the round and all the men are falling down."*

Republic limps towards its close. A draggy electro dirge, "Times Change" draws a dubious parallel between the narrator's pains of the present and the earthquake that destroyed the Jamaican town of Port Royal in 1692. In "Special", Sumner bemoans the end of a relationship (*"there's nothing left"*) over a generic backing that has little trace of his bandmates' presence. All of which makes the closing near-instrumental "Avalanche" seem unexpectedly heroic. For one thing, it sounds like Morris is behind a drumkit. And with its cascading guitars and synths – evocative of the majestic opening of "Your Silent Face" – the song feels like a last-minute home-side rally at the end of a dismal match. The sole word it contains – repeated by Gilbert in a beautifully wistful voice – is "faith" and it's enough to restore a measure of that in listeners worn out by *Republic*'s rancour.

Then again, it seems likelier the majority of the consumers who sent the album to the top of the UK charts (and No 11 in the US) did not feel compelled to venture far beyond the four singles stacked conveniently at the top of the track listing. Though a commercial triumph for the band's new label London – who scooped up the most coveted pickings from Factory's bankrupt carcass – *Republic* was a Pyrrhic victory at best, New Order's combatants once again walking away from the field of battle in opposite directions.

> "IT WAS JUST A VERY, VERY UNPLEASANT RECORD TO MAKE"
> **STEPHEN MORRIS**

TRACK MARKS

1. Regret ★★★★★
2. World ★★★★
3. Ruined In A Day ★★★
4. Spooky ★★★
5. Everyone Everywhere ★★
6. Young Offender ★★★
7. Liar ★★
8. Chemical ★★★
9. Times Change ★★
10. Special ★★
11. Avalanche ★★★★

Label: London
Produced by: Stephen Hague and New Order
Recorded at: Real World, Wiltshire; RAK, London
Personnel: Bernard Sumner (vocals, guitars, synthesisers, programming), Peter Hook (four- and six-stringed bass, programming), Stephen Morris (drums, synthesisers, programming), Gillian Gilbert (synths, guitars, programming, vocal on "Avalanche"), Audrey Riley (cello, string arrs), David Rhodes (additional guitar), Andy Duncan (additional programming), Dee Lewis (bk vocals)
Highest chart position: UK 1; US 11

"IT'S LIKE A REBIRTH, WHEN WE GET TO PLAY AGAIN"

Factory is dead, long live New Order. Over dodgy pizza and extortionate lagers in Rome, the foursome pick through the wreckage of Factory ("not very good at business") and deny rumours of a split to **DAVID QUANTICK**. "We can't do without it," says Peter Hook, as *Republic* is released – just don't expect mammoth tours. "I don't really want to drink myself to death," **BERNARD SUMNER** explains...

STEVE DOUBLE/CAMERA PRESS

Mod for it: New Order in Rome to film a video for "Regret", lead single from *Republic*, early 1993

NME 10/04/93

NEW ORDER are sitting in the bar of the Hotel Amazingly Expensive in Rome, late at night, drinking beer and looking tired after a long day trundling round town to be videoed looking moody in alleyways and up steps. In a far corner of the bar, a pianist with a portable synthesiser works his way through some requests.

Bernard Sumner is agitated. "Go up and ask for that Elton John song," he demands, before croaking the opening lines of "Your Song". Gillian Gilbert is chipper. "'The Lady In Red', that would be good," she lies. Peter Hook is peevish. "He was doing 'Groovy Kind Of Love' and someone said it was a Phil Collins song," moans Britain's last Wayne Fontana And The Mindbenders fan.

The pianist switches to "Another Day In Paradise". "I love this song," says Barney, dry as deserts, "it's got a message to it."

"Rock'n'roll..." sighs Stephen Morris.

"Where?" says Peter Hook, and New Order collectively laugh the laugh of wise old rock persons...

SOME of you may have forgotten New Order, the band who haven't released a single since 1990's "World In Motion" or an album since 1989's *Technique*. In that time they have done solo things, seen Madchester and its New Order-sponsored cradle, The Haçienda, rise and fall, and watched the label that seemed as much part of them as they were of it, Factory Records, collapse into bankruptcy. In 1993, New Order are London Records recording artistes, elder statesmen of rock, contemporaries now only of U2 and perhaps The Cure, and still the most remarkable band on Earth.

No band has ever been quite like New Order, no-one's ever managed to span the various valleys of pop with such style and ability, from the unique dance thing that was "Blue Monday" and the arching pop dignity of "Bizarre Love Triangle", to the cutting club sweat of "Fine Time" and the sheer daft beauty of "Love Vigilantes". Born in the very 1979 great-coated mystique of Joy Division, New Order are both dance crazy and home to the most exciting guitar and bass noise in the post-punk world.

And now they are back with a single, "Regret", which is hewn-from-marble classic New Order, and an album, *Republic*, which is the first New Order album to have a producer (Stephen Hague of Pet Shop Boys and "True Faith" repute) and which mixes consistency with brilliance. *Republic* isn't *Technique* 2 and it isn't three solo projects jammed together at random. It is an extraordinary album that runs the gamut of New Order's patent styles and then races off into new pop avenues.

Thank God for that, eh? If *Republic* had been bollocks then everyone would have looked very silly and we'd have probably had Electronic going on a package tour with Revenge and The Other Two. But instead, *Republic* is great, "Regret" is the best single of 1993 yet, and we're all in Rome drinking bloody expensive beer and asking for Elton John songs.

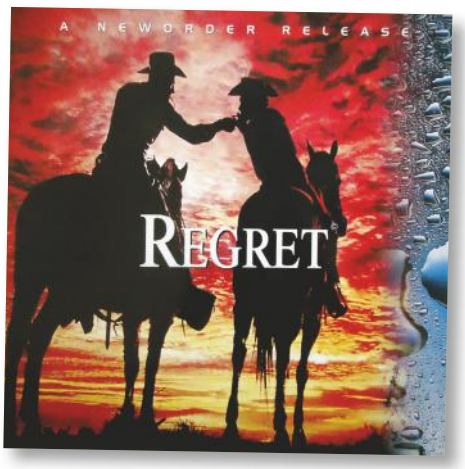
So hey! Let's throw another 50,000,000 lire at the waiter and go meet the gang!

"Just wait 'til tomorrow, I guess that's what they all say/Just before they fall apart"
– "Regret"

NEW ORDER like to do their interviews in small mobile units. This is either because none of them have ever agreed about anything ever or because Hooky and Barney never get up before lunchtime. So come Sunday afternoon, Stephen and Gillian cram themselves into a booth in the Café De How Much?! across the road from the hotel and do their bit of the interview.

Gilbert and Morris are God's own couple, the sort of people who in Disney films adopt Benny the lovable eagle and train him to be part of society. Neither as dazed-sounding as Barney nor as cheerfully aggressive as Peter Hook, Stephen and Gillian are dry, droll and sensible; musically, however, they have created some extraordinarily dreamy music, whether it's The Other Two's wondrous "Tasty Fish" or the last track on *Republic*, the stately "Avalanche".

Stephen drawls, "We wanted to call the album 'Carry On New Order' but Peter Saville wasn't up to the graphics," and we are off, commencing, for fact fans, with a résumé of New Order – The Lost



Years. "We done that football record," sighs Stephen. "And it was the November after that we were supposed to be doing this record, but we had previous engagements that we'd forgotten about. It was a bit awkward for me and Gillian because we'd turned down some soundtracks and we were at a loose end, so we done The Other Two for a bit. Finally got that finished just recently, which takes us up to 18 months ago, ha ha..."

"We were supposed to start with New Order in November, weren't we?" asks Gillian.

Stephen sighs again. "That didn't happen, then it was supposed to be January, and that didn't happen... About 18 months ago we all got together in one space at the same time. And that was an off-and-on thing because Barney went off doing 'Disappointed' for a bit and Hooky went off doing gigs for a bit, and we carried on like that until last April, when we had 14 vague ideas under our belt, got them into the studio and hoped they were songs. Got Stephen Hague because we thought we needed some help..."

"If we hadn't had a producer we'd still be doing it," snorts Gillian. "And probably not speaking to each other. Ha ha!"

The result is an album with a kind of beefy poppiness to it. *Republic* is great, but it's not as odd as some New Order discs.

"I thought it would be a lot more extreme, to be honest, and that's all I can say about it, because we've been in the studio for three years now and we've not had time to get reflective about music," says Stephen, tiredly. Then he perks up. "We just started the other week with a Gram Parsons evening. Cheered me up, anyway. Didn't do much for you," he snorts to Gillian.

"I'd never heard of him," confesses Gillian happily. "And we put Morrissey on..."

"Morrissey always cheers me up." Stephen announces. "Yep. Old Moz."

Less cheering than the music of Union Jack Boy was the collapse of Factory, home to most of New Order since 1978; a collapse which began and ended during the making of *Republic*.

"I think all that comes across if not through the lyrics but the mood of the album..." muses Stephen. "There's stuff in the press about a lot of tension, which suggests it was tension between us four, and it wasn't really. If there was tension, it was 'What the bloody hell is going on?' tension.

"There was one day when it suddenly dawned on us that we thought we were the only ones not getting paid; then we realised that absolutely fucking everyone wasn't getting paid and it was, 'Oh my God! Look, we'll all get together and we'll go on strike, sort it out...' Never bleeding happened."

If *Republic* had come out on Factory, would it have saved the label financially?

"It probably would, but you'd just have been postponing the inevitable, really," grimaces

"They owed everybody a lot of money": Gilbert and Morris reflect on the demise of Factory Records

DAVID TONGE/GETTY IMAGES

Stephen. Gillian shrugs. "They were just bad at business, full stop, really."

"So many bad decisions or the right decisions at the wrong time. Like buying property just when it was going down. They can't say we didn't tell 'em," says Stephen, shaking his head like a strange uncle. "Biggest shock for me when we were just going in the studio was finding out the Mondays were going to Barbados to do their album. It was like, hang on a minute, you've got your two major acts in the studio at the same time, you're already a bit jittery, shouldn't you stagger it a bit?"

Factory is now being presented as a label of anarchy, so why did it last so long?

"I think certain people having the gift of the gab and managing to persuade. Bullshit, I think, sums it up – bullshit that everything would be OK," says Stephen, searching for le mot juste. "You can only bullshit banks so long, eventually they get fed up. If they'd been able to find a mad multimillionaire, they'd've been able to carry on. But they could only postpone it."

Why didn't New Order just walk away?

"I would have loved to have been in that situation," says Stephen. "No, you've got emotional ties because you've known 'em so long, it's not really been a business-type relationship. You started off together and all that, you feel a certain obligation to them... Also, because they're spending our money, for want of a better word, you're always holding out, hoping you'll get a bit of it back."

"They owed New Order a lot of money as well," says Gillian, practically.

"They owed everybody a lot of money," sighs Stephen. "You can't get away from it."

Stephen and Gillian seem happy to be with London Records, although there are "loose ends" to tie up, but Gillian acknowledges that the company treats them well "because you've got something to sell. You've been used in a way."

"That was how you felt with Factory," announces Stephen. "They thought you were battery hens, you were stuck in a studio and they were waiting – 'As soon as we get this one out, we'll be rocking!' We were very depressed battery hens."

This depression was, naturally, compounded by *NME*'s very own Fred Dellar, whose diligence as a researcher unwittingly plunged the band into even deeper gloom.

"One thing for me when I really gasped was actually the *NME*, when they did the Factory discography. My eyes nearly popped out of my head," goggles Stephen. "It was the FAC numbers – after every New Order record, the number after was a complete fucking white elephant. FAC 50 was *Movement*, FAC 51 was the Haçienda. There was 'World In Motion' and the one after 'World In Motion' was the Factory building. Uncanny... You could see your history...Making money, wasting money, making money, wasting money."

"We took it to the studio. It was just like having a diary," says Gillian in amused horror. "There was a whole raft of bands at the start, Section 25 and Orchestral Manoeuvres In The Dark and all that, and then as it got on it was less and less records and more stupid, wasteful..."

"More dumb things..." snorts Stephen.

"Then it just came down to us and the Mondays," Gillian notes. Stephen elaborates. "It was Mondays, Mondays, Mondays, Rob Gretton's teeth, New Order, New Order, New Order..."

The whole business is reminiscent of the last days of The Beatles. Solo projects, chaos, huge sums of money wasted and total disarray...

"It is a bit like the Apple thing," Stephen agrees. "They bought all this gear and people walked off with it, never saw it again... It was completely disorganised, very like Factory. We were going to play on the roof of the building, but I can't stand heights."

On that note, the Fab Two rise as one to hit the sunny streets of *Roma*; and I gird my loins to meet Peter Hook, Pop's Rudest Man.

"*Were you abandoned in your youth?/ Because if not, you will be soon*" – "Liar"

PETER HOOK – aka Hooky The Pirate King, aka The Bike Messenger From Hell, aka The Hookster Who Laughs As He Puts Another Enemy To The Sword – sits down and immediately orders a foaming flagon of human blood. The first question – the one about what have you been doing since "World In Motion" – produces a shower of invective.

"No wonder you're here 'til Wednesday! Fuckinell! Can't you be more specific? Fuckinell! I'll have to get me diary."

Hook squints at the tape recorder. "It's been on pause all the bloody time, you dickhead. We've missed all them pearls of wisdom."

Peter roars like Bluebeard. He likes the New Order LP. "Stephen Hague's kept 'em all very good New Order songs. The journalists in Germany were saying it sounded too New Order and you're thinking, well, fuckinell, what do you expect? If New Order can't do a New Order record, who can?"

Hooky roars again, then sighs melodramatically. "Some people are never happy, are they?"

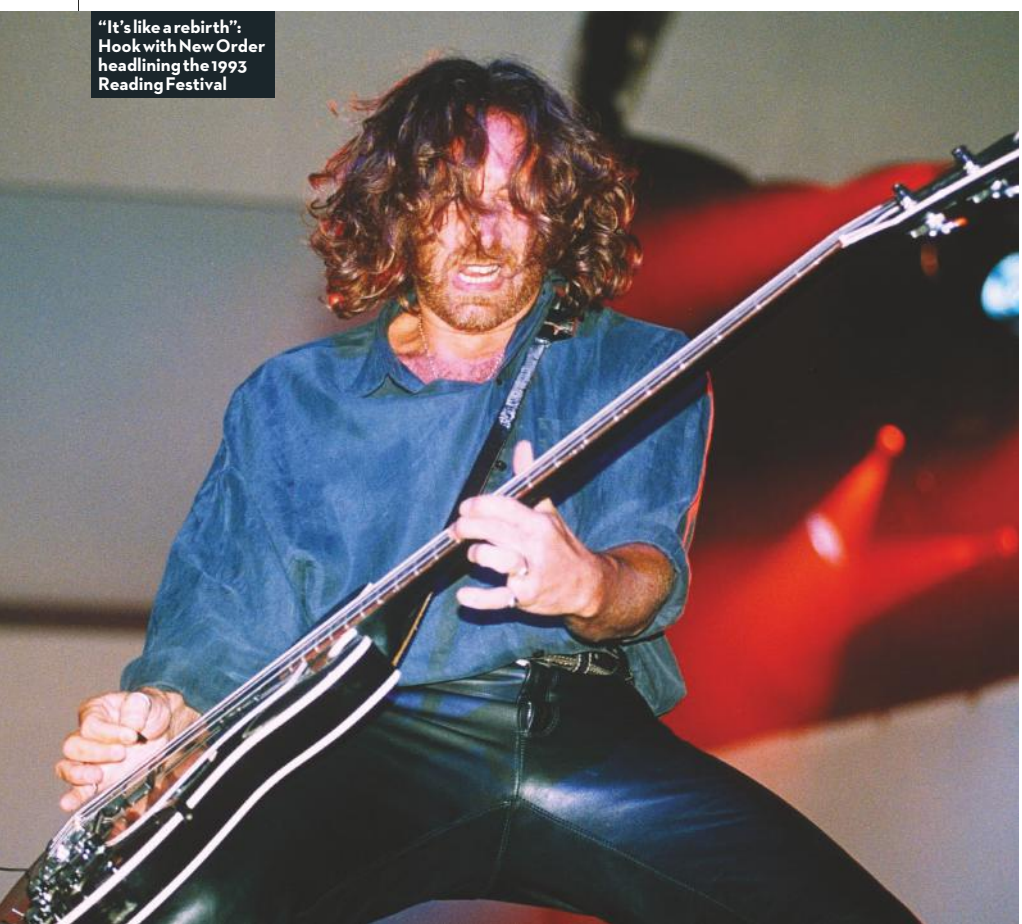
Asked about his solo career, the Pirate King becomes strangely pensive. "It made you feel better about life and about New Order," he says, using the word 'you' to mean 'I' in a way that, oddly enough, all the band adopt. "I don't think it had a big impact musically, because Stephen Hague stopped that. The biggest factor in it was you found yourself a little bit outside of New Order and you felt happier. And when you came back, it made you want to be in New Order again."

Peter sighs. "It wasn't like that before – you were heartily sick of it, 14 years is enough for any man or beast. But when you got back together again it was, 'Oh God, this is good.' It also made you appreciate what New Order had, so that was nice."

Hook likes being in New Order, he says, "'cos I get to come to Rome and talk to dickheads like you and get pissed", but then he becomes serious and amends his statement to: "No, I've always liked being in New Order, I'm proud of it, so... no problem." The Factory situation is a different fish, however.

"I was very sad about it, but it was such a long, slow process the way it went through, they'd been juggling eggs for a long time and they were getting more and more eggs thrown at them and you knew they wouldn't be able to keep them

> "THAT WAS HOW YOU FELT WITH FACTORY – THEY THOUGHT YOU WERE BATTERY HENS"
> STEPHEN MORRIS



"It's like a rebirth": Hook with New Order headlining the 1993 Reading Festival

BRIAN RASIC/GETTY IMAGES

in the air, really," says wise old Hooky and then, in a typically Hook-like mixture of sincerity, black comedy and sentiment, declares, "One of the saddest moments of me life actually – apart from when he died, what was his name? – was when I was walking down Deansgate and there was a billboard where the guy sells the papers, and the billboard said 'FACTORY IN $3,500,000 BANKRUPTCY CRASH'. And even though I knew it was all happening, to see it written down on some guy's billboard selling papers in Deansgate... FUCKing weird. It was really sad..."

Peter is optimistic about the future.

"Even though it was so sad and you've lost so much money and you stand to lose much more, like the Hassie and Dry and that, you've got to carry on," he declares. "And the thing about London Records, even though they seem very trad, dad, I'm sure after they've worked with us for a while they're gonna be more like Factory than Factory were. They're changing already..."

Really? It seems unlikely that a major European multinational will change its practices to accommodate four people in a pop group.

"They are! Listen, I'm in a fucking group and I'm telling you, right!" bellows jolly Peter. "What are you fucking going on about?! Ha ha ha! You journalists are always right! Bastards!"

After some years, Hooky calms down and says, "You're four people who have the ability to sell fucking five million records. It's not as if you're four people who've just wandered into the office looking for a drink of water, is it?"

Peter Hook's main obsession in life, it sometimes seems, is the fact that he is one of those four people. His love for New Order is matched only by his pride in the band. His eyes fill with a fatherly delight as he says, "When he was doing one of our videos, Jonathan Demme said, 'After meeting you, I realised that none of you, brain-wise, have got a f-ing clue about what you're doing.' He said, 'I just want to show your fingers, 'cos that's where it comes from.'"

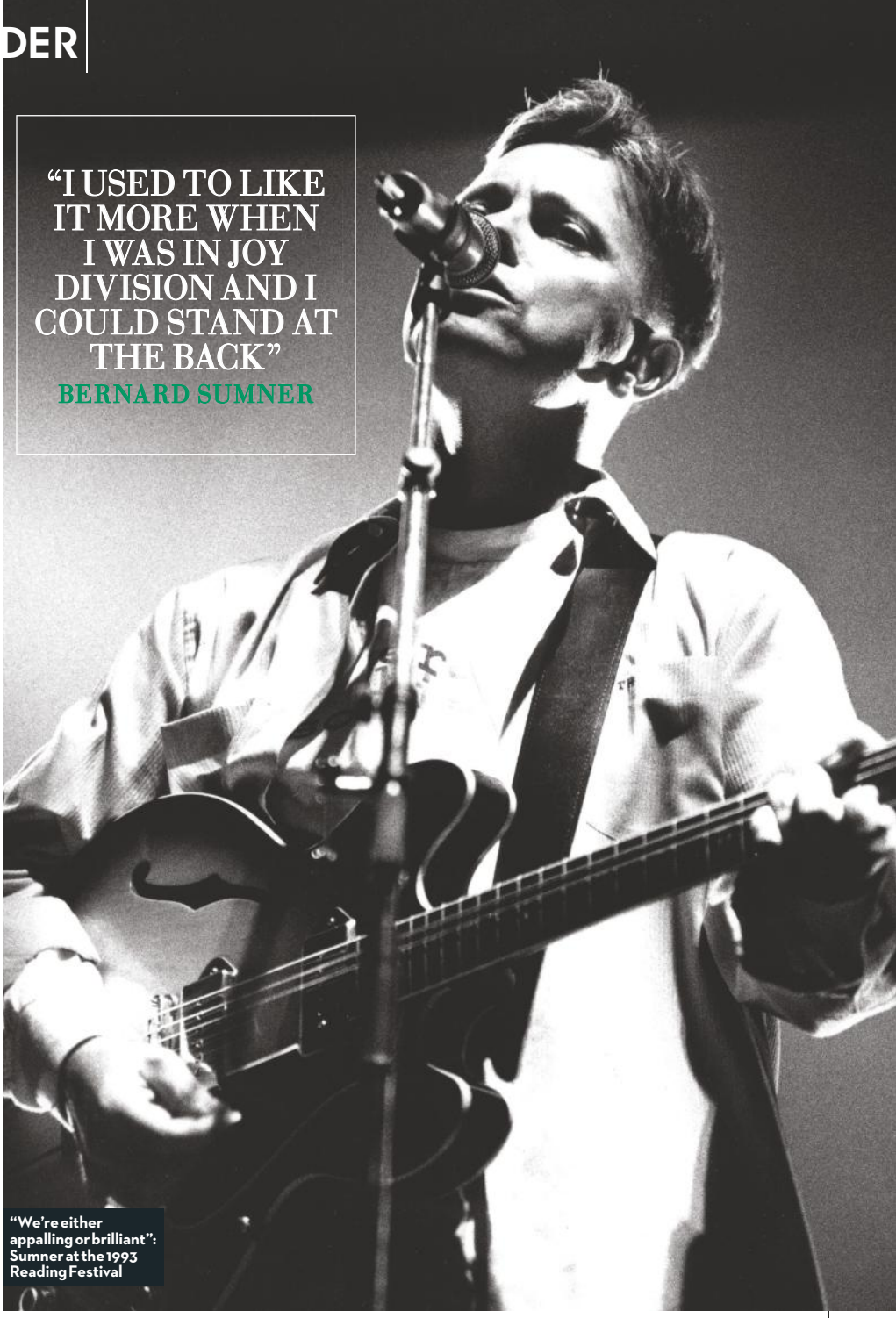
Peter orders a Bloody Mary, then muses, "That's what keeps you normal, 'cos you're not conscious of it. People like Prince, Axl Rose, they're conscious of it, and that's what makes them obnoxious, is that the word for it? I'd much rather be as I am, I couldn't imagine being any different. Happy as a pig in shit."

Will this happiness last? Will New Order go on past this record?

"I don't know, really," Hooky ponders. "Sometimes I look at Barney and even though he thinks he could maybe do without it, it's pretty bloody obvious that he can't. It's the same with Stephen and Gillian, you know – we all call each other shit, but the fact that you're here again means you can't do without it. The whole point about doing the solo projects in the first place was everyone's thinking, 'Right! Thank God I've got rid of those twats, they were driving me fucking mad!' And then a year later it's, 'When are we doing our record?'"

The idea of a New Orderless life is clearly vexing. "I don't know," Hooky says again. "I'd hate to think so and I'm really looking forward to the next bit; it's like a rebirth, when we get to play again. I'm really, really looking forward to it, just to walk out on stage and play New Order songs again. I really can't wait... I think Barney, even though he's still got a down on this whole live thing, when he actually goes out and does it, he'll change his mind."

> "I USED TO LIKE IT MORE WHEN I WAS IN JOY DIVISION AND I COULD STAND AT THE BACK"
> BERNARD SUMNER



"We're either appalling or brilliant": Sumner at the 1993 Reading Festival

STEPHEN SWEET

Peter stretches and considers.

"It's 'cos we're a lot different now. By just getting away from each other, you've been able to grow up a lot, relax a lot more. Because everyone's doing the other things – they're doing The Other Two, I'm doing Revenge, he's doing New Order, er, Electronic... That's a Freudian slip there! Ha ha ha ha!" he cries, laughing merrily.

Before the Pirate King roars off again in search of some unspeakable vice, I ask him if he is the one most keen on being in New Order, and he is briefly pensive.

"Maybe it's just your personality," he nods. "Steve and Gillian and Barney aren't like me, I'm a bit more bombastic, surly, confident, whatever. It's like the Haçienda...."

Hooky becomes agitated.

"Whenever I see them getting disillusioned with Factory, I feel like grabbing hold of them, shaking them and going, 'Come on, you fuckers, there's 1,500 fucking idiots out there going mad every fucking Friday and Saturday for you, you've done it for 'em, for your music and whatever you've achieved, you should be proud of it... But they're not that type of person."

"I dunno. I'll have that on me gravestone – 'New Order'. Fucking hell. Bollocks! Ha ha ha!"

Peter Hook quakes with devil laughter. "No, what I'll have on me gravestone is 'I'll Be Back'! Ha ha ha ha!"

Oh dear. Let's make video!

MAKING VIDEOS is really boring. Sometimes Barney pretends to play the guitar in his hotel room and sometimes the rest of the band stand around in an alley at night. I am Mr Lucky and stand in the biggest dog-do in the history of Italy. Later we dine in what Bernard Sumner claims is a kosher Italian restaurant and I receive an invaluable piece of advice from Hooky ("You want the toilet? Turn left and it's the door with the

"Somebody was going to get killed": the Haçienda, FAC 51, which was closed for a period in 1991

woman on it"). Repairing to the hotel bar for a drink, we are all exhausted from our hectic schedule. "I'm so tired," says Barney. "This bloke came up to me and said, 'Hello, I'm Toby from MTV,' and I said, 'I'm sorry, mate, I don't speak Italian."

Time for bed.

"*Maybe I've forgotten the name and the address/Of everyone I've ever met/It's nothing I regret*" – "Regret"

THE NEXT DAY, Bernard Sumner is up early to buy sunglasses, but all the shops are shut owing to a quaint Roman tradition known, according to Barney, as "siesta fiesta". Instead, we go to another pavement cafe. A waiter blessed with the insouciance of Nero and the waiting talent of Eddie "The Eagle" Edwards reluctantly lets us sit and disappears for a thousand years before taking our orders and, it would appear, burning them.

Time to begin. Barney – at 37 looking like a teenage street urchin, like the Artful Dodger cast in *The Tin Drum* – recaps on his current career. He is still working with Electronic.

"We got future collaborations planned, we're gonna do a track with DNA, we're gonna be doing a track with Wolfgang Flur and Karl Bartos, the two that left Kraftwerk," he drawls. "One of the reasons for doing Electronic was with New Order no-one's really into collaborations and, uh, I was."

It's hard to imagine members of New Order – producers of some of the most self-contained, self-invented music on Earth – doing something as normal as collaborating. They are not musicianly.

"It's peculiar. We never talk about music. We talk about shit all the time. And we always have done," snorts Barney.

"When I started back working with New Order, that's the first thing I noticed. I work with Johnny [*Marr*] and all the time it's always, 'Have you heard this record, have you heard that record, I think this track should go in this direction, I think it should go in that direction,' but with New Order everyone comes in the studio and talks about what they had for breakfast. And I realised it's always been like that. It's quite healthy, I suppose."

Barney's tea comes and an argument about its lack of milk ensues. Milk is brought. "I asked for milk," Barney mutters and then adopts a frightening Italian accent. "You no ask for milk! You English bastard! Friend of Gazza!... What was I saying?"

We move on to the topic of Factory and Barney's feelings on its demise.

"I feel very sad and angry, really," he muses. "I'm sad because it was a good idea and some of the groups were pretty successful on it, and I'm angry because they didn't realise their potential. Used their money wisely... When they went down, they had the Mondays who made money and New Order who were going to make money – not that we saw any of it, heh heh! – and Electronic who, although Tony denies it, made Factory a lot of money. He had those three bands that should have made Factory financially secure... But they blew it."

Barney sips his tea and concedes, "It's not all managerial faults. There were a lot of events that couldn't be avoided, like the Haçienda closing down for six months, which was an incredible drain on the finances of both Factory and New Order, but we had to try and stop the violence. We all felt that if we didn't shut the Haçienda somebody was going to get killed and we had to show the gangs that it was either all or nothing, really.

"Tony quotes about 17 different events that eventually brought Factory to its knees, but that's the way disasters happen, isn't it? And to be fair to him, I've seen articles insinuating that Tony's a money-grabbing arsehole breadhead, and he isn't that at all. In his favour, he's really, really upset that he's let people down and he's trying desperately to pay back people that Factory owe money to. He's not the ogre that certain articles have been insinuating. He's just not the world's best businessman, that's all."

Barney confesses himself happy that New Order didn't deliver *Republic* in time to "save" Factory.

"I'm very glad that we've not been touring and we've not made an album, because they would have owed us a fortune if we'd gone down, so the fact that we didn't was a nice turn of events so far as I'm concerned. And they shouldn't have to rely on one band, because that puts too much pressure on us... I sound like a right self-righteous bastard, don't I?"

Barney warms to his theme of bastardry. "Basically, it's their bank account and they should look after it. New Order didn't have any business dealings with Factory apart from the Haçienda and Dry... And, being an even more self-righteous bastard, the Haçienda and Dry make money! Whose fucking fault is that then?! Ha ha! But I'm not bitter about it. I still like Tony. I still like Alan... What the fucking hell is that? *Scusi*!"

A pizza has arrived. It does not resemble the pizza Bernard ordered, so it is sent back after complex debate with our pal the waiter.

"Lying Italian c–!" mutters Barney. "Now, what Rob Gretton [*New Order's manager*] would do in a situation like this is give the guy a huge fucking tip to make him feel better. Honestly, I'm not joking. But I'm not Rob. This is the Fawlty Towers of Italian restaurants."

Meanwhile, life goes on. New Order are considering playing 13 concerts around the world, but "We've not got any plans yet, contrary to what Hooky said in the *NME* about confirmed gigs, heh heh. We're doing gigs hopefully in July, but I don't wanna do loads."

Barney is not the king of live performance.

"I used to like it more when I was in Joy Division and I could stand at the back with a synthesiser," he claims. "Like being at a party, standing at the back watching everyone else...

"Also, I tend to overindulge at gigs and sometimes it has a disastrous effect on my, ah, health. I don't really want to drink myself to death, so that's one of the reasons I'm not too keen on gigging these days."

One of New Order's idiosyncrasies is that live they are always either great or appalling; there is no middle ground. Barney agrees.

"That's true. I don't think we could do it any other way, heh heh! We've tried rehearsing and all that shit, but it just doesn't work. We're either appalling or brilliant... Fucking hell, that's weird tea. Isn't that a weird colour!"

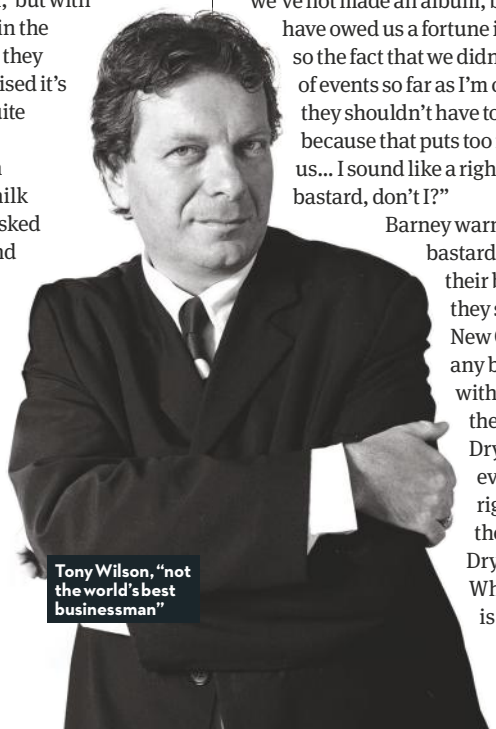
Barney's attention wanders. "Can I have some of your beer? Oh, you've got a cold, haven't you? The cold virus lives on a glass for two hours. What was that last question? Live, yeah. I don't know how the fuck that happens after years and years... I think when a lot of groups play, it's like an act. There's two parts to music – there's the creative part which is writing and there's performance, and I prefer writing. Your performer's more kind of an actor type.

"A lot of bands will play the same songs every night, crack the same jokes, they do the same thing every night so you get a consistently good show, whereas with New Order we don't even know what songs we're gonna play, just sit in the dressing room before and go, 'Which songs do you want to do?'

"It's usually Steve and Hooky decide the setlist, because I'm crap at it. I might say, 'Alright, I fancy playing 'Perfect Kiss' or 'Bizarre Love Triangle', and we just make it up an hour before we go on stage. So, ha, that doesn't help in terms of getting things right... But it makes life interesting."

Which is part of the reason why New Order are replete with greatness. They are the only giant band in the world who act with any degree of life and oddness.

Or, as Barney puts it, "I remember in Preston we played the dub version of 'Shellshock' live! People at the front of the stage were laughing!"



Tony Wilson, "not the world's best businessman"

CLIVE HUNTE/REDFERNS; JON SUPER/REDFERNS

NEW ORDER

GET READY

With famous friends in tow, the reunited electro-rock New Order hit the 21st century running. | *By* **MARK BEAUMONT**

EVEN without the collapse of Factory and the interpersonal problems that made the recording of 1993's *Republic* a living hell, New Order were well-advised to sit out Britpop. This was an age of guitar-led swagger and sauce rather than steely synthpop, and one which celebrated those of the old guard that played along – Weller, Edwyn Collins, Stephen Duffy – while leaving most of the alternative '80s stalwarts – The Cure, U2, Depeche Mode, Morrissey – to drift off into dislocated big-league bubbles. Superstar DJs like the Chemical Brothers and Fatboy Slim were shifting the dance conversation onto bigger, beatier topics and leftfield dancefloor peers like Shaun Ryder and Primal Scream had to make grand statement evolutions to keep a foothold on the era. Arguably, New Order would have been drowned out by the noise of the mid-'90s.

They reconvened in 1998, at Rob Gretton's behest, at a time far more welcoming to imaginative behemoth bands. Radiohead's *OK Computer* and The Verve's *Urban Hymns* had crushed Britpop like a bug beneath their shoes and the rock/electro crossover was centre-frame once more thanks to the likes of Super Furry Animals, Beck, The Beta Band and Fatboy Slim's remix of Cornershop's "Brimful Of Asha". After five years apart working on separate projects – Electronic's second album, Monaco's half-million-selling first, further slowburn activity from The Other Two – they were amenable to each other too. "We decided before we agreed to doing any gig, to have a meeting, and if anyone had any grudges to bear, to iron them out," Sumner said. A deal, it seems, was mutually agreed on.

CRITICS' VERDICTS

"A sense of idiot joy colours the whole of *Get Ready*. Being in New Order never sounded like half as much fun as it does here.... Best not to wonder why they do what they do, then. Best just to sit back and enjoy. They're bring you a love that's true."
JIM WIRTH, NME, AUGUST 18, 2001

And it featured much guitar, a nod to the alternative rock breakthroughs that had defined the '90s but also, as Sumner explained to *Pitchfork*, "we felt that we'd left that instrument alone for a long time." "The title of the album is *Get Ready* so it could mean anything or nothing," Hook elaborated elsewhere. "I thought it was just nice; New Order, *Get Ready*; 'cos we are, we're getting ready for the next phase of our musical lives both physically and mentally." By the time it landed in August 2001, after a year of gestation (and now a memorial to Rob Gretton who died from a heart attack in 1999), *Get Ready* dovetailed with the next big guitar rock explosion, emerging within a month of The Strokes' game-changing *Is This It*. What it lacked, however, was the New York garage rock scene's tautness, brevity and serrated edge. While certainly a broadening of New Order's sonic horizons, in wider cultural terms this 50-minute future rock record was virtually obsolete straight off the shelves.

Still, viewed within its own big-league bubble *Get Ready* largely did the business. The first single, "Crystal", was originally gifted by Sumner to Corvin Dalek of German label Mastermind Of Success, but when Pete Tong caught wind of it and described it as the best New Order song since "Blue Monday", Sumner had New Order record it in all its sizzling, sci-fi glory. It certainly had impact: landing in the Top 10 its cavernous space goth sweep, resembling a cryogenically frozen Cure blasting off on an intergalactic voyage, announced New Order as a decidedly 21st-century

TRACK MARKS

1. Crystal ★★★★★
2. 60 Miles An Hour ★★★★
3. Turn My Way ★★★★
4. Vicious Streak ★
5. Primitive Notion ★★★★
6. Slow Jam ★★★
7. Rock The Shack ★★★
8. Someone Like You ★★
9. Close Range ★★★
10. Run Wild ★★★★★

Label: London
Produced by: Steve Osborne, Flood, New Order, David Kahne
Recorded at: Real World, Box; Sarm Hook End, London; Rockfield, Wales
Personnel: Bernard Sumner (vocals, guitar, melodica, programming, synths), Peter Hook (bass, guitars), Gillian Gilbert (keyboards), Stephen Morris (drums, programming), Dawn Zee (backing vocals), Billy Corgan (guest vocals), Bobby Gillespie (guest vocals), Andrew Innes (guitar)
Highest chart position: UK 6; US 41

proposition, even if Barney's lyrics remained stuck firmly in the sixth-form. *"Here comes love,"* he declared midway through a song about the fragility of youth and romance, *"it's like honey, you can't buy it with money."*

The "Crystal" video would arguably prove more influential on the rising generation of alt.rockers than the song. The fake young New Order playing the song in the clip had a name splashed across their bass drum that would catch the eye of a certain bunch of Las Vegas New Order fanatics: The Killers.

This space-rock angle of Sumner and co reborn as a Salford-basement Garbage continued into the album's second single "60 Miles An Hour", a grungy garage rock escape anthem grafted with a titanium skeleton, and coloured the catchy, confrontational "Primitive Notion" and "Close Range", a glossy pop rewrite of Primal Scream's "Kill All Hippies". The album's guest spots fed the narrative too, with Bobby Gillespie lending his seditious slur to the Stonesy "Rock The Shack" and Billy Corgan echoing Sumner's rejection of life's accepted trajectories (*"I don't wanna be like other people are/Don't want to own a key, don't want to wash my car"*) over a miasma of psychedelic warps and Hook's vapour trail bassline on "Turn My Way". Corgan liked being in New Order so much he briefly hopped on the tour.

AS Sumner sang repeatedly of fresh starts and refusing to fit in, *Get Ready* only disappointed when it stumbled into conformity. In trying to keep parenting electronica as it came of age, they only succeeded in embarrassing it – "Someone Like You" dove headfirst into the sort of Latino electro soul that you'd consider far beneath the band that gave us "Bizarre Love Triangle", while "Vicious Streak" was nigh on six minutes of atmospheric minimalist house signifying nothing. On the rock front, "Slow Jam", written as a tell-all postcard home from a forlorn and boozy solo holiday, could have been produced by any of the copious late '90s bands who realised there was suddenly a market for an Oasis with synths.

Without those three tracks a 35-minute *Get Ready* might have sat easier alongside the New York style punks of 2001, but would also have lacked the creative momentum that had brought New Order back together in the first place. There would be no place on such a record for the stunning final track "Run Wild" for a start; the sound of 1980s Manchester reworked into a lustrous acoustic campfire song that expanded into a string and harmonica piece predicting Spiritualized's future country epics. *"I'm gonna live 'til I die, I'm gonna live to get high,"* Sumner sings, eying *"dusty roads to distant places"* with the devil on his side. It was the last time that New Order, certainly in their classic lineup, would sound so decided on direction and pumped with possibility.

> *GET READY* DOVETAILED WITH THE NEXT BIG GUITAR-ROCK EXPLOSION

NEW ORDER

WAITING FOR THE SIRENS' CALL

Showered with acclaim, New Order settle into heritage status. A little too comfortable in the post-punk basement, a little creaky on the dancefloor. | *By* **JOHN LEWIS**

BY 2005, New Order had truly entered the rock'n'roll pantheon. BBC Radio 6Music greeted the announcement of this new album with a "New Order Day", devoting an entire day of programming to the band. Dance music award shows in Miami and Germany were showering lifetime achievement awards upon them, while the Brit Awards had shortlisted "Love Will Tear Us Apart" as one of the five best songs of the last quarter century. When New Order accepted a special "Godlike Genius" gong at the *NME* Awards in February 2005, among the other award winners that evening were plenty of younger artists – from The Killers to Franz Ferdinand, Kaiser Chiefs to Gwen Stefani – all making music clearly informed by the sonic world that Joy Division and New Order had created.

A new generation of post-punk and synthpop acts might have been doffing their hats to New Order, but the band themselves were no longer at the cutting edge. *Waiting For The Sirens' Call* is a decent collection of songs but it is effectively the work of a heritage rock act, playing to their strengths of two decades ago. It was also a band in a state of flux: long-time Bernard Sumner associate Phil Cunningham had joined the band, replacing Gillian Gilbert who had taken temporary leave to spend more time with her and Stephen Morris's children, while tensions between Peter Hook and Bernard Sumner would result in Hook leaving the band just 18 months after the album's release. Four co-producers – post-punk veteran John Leckie, Smiths sidekick Stephen Street, dancefloor star Stuart Price and the band's own engineer Jim Spencer – added to the slight lack of cohesion. Indeed the band recorded many more tracks than they needed during these 2003 and 2004 sessions, eight of which showed up on the 2013 compilation *Lost Sirens*.

CRICTICS' VERDICTS

"The title track is 'Regret' chilled out on methadone, 'Krafty' is 'Regret' taking so much methadone it thinks it's Tinkerbell and can fly (it is and it can), and 'Morning Night And Day' is essentially U2's 'Vertigo' if it woke up gay."
MARK BEAUMONT, NME, 26/03/05

Broadly speaking, the tracks here split into two New Orders – the monochrome indie band found on their early album tracks (represented here by tracks 1–4 and 10–11), and the primary-coloured synthpop act more familiar to the singles chart (that's tracks 5–8). By this stage in their career, the band sounded more comfortable in the former, guitar-based incarnation, and it's this New Order that provides the album with most of its highlights.

The opening track "Who's Joe?" opens with doomy *Unknown Pleasures* synth lines, but soon turns into a chugging, minor-key rock anthem topped by one of Sumner's rare narrative lyrics, along the lines of "Love Vigilantes", here telling the story of a disturbed man who had his "*heart broke by a woman/now it doesn't work any more*". Lyrically it sounds oddly like a sequel to Jimi Hendrix's "Hey Joe", as if belatedly tracking down the man who killed his wife for messing around with another man. "Hey Now What You Doing", co-produced with Stephen Street, is another trad rocker, kicking off with the guitar riff lifted from REM's "The One I Love" and serving as a loving letter of encouragement to a clinically depressed friend. As so often, Sumner's doggerel lurches from the inspired ("*You had the brightest future/Writing songs on your computer*") to the asinine ("*Is it love or is it hate/Banging on an open gate*").

Continuing in the rock vein is the superb, bittersweet title track, with a simple vocal melody, Hook's countermelody and some suitably icy synths. The lyric appears to be an extended apology to a spouse from a man who has been lured into infidelity by the "*sirens*" of rock'n'roll ("*We all want some kind of love/But sometimes it's not enough/To the wall and through the door/With a stranger on the shore*"). Best of all might be the lead single,

TRACK MARKS

1. Who's Joe? ★★★
2. Hey Now What You Doing ★★★★
3. Waiting For The Sirens' Call ★★★★
4. Krafty ★★★★
5. I Told You So ★★
6. Morning Night And Day ★★
7. Dracula's Castle ★★
8. Jetstream ★★★
9. Guilt Is A Useless Emotion ★★★
10. Turn ★★★
11. Working Overtime ★★★★

Label: London/ Warner Bros
Produced by: New Order with Jim Spencer, Stephen Street, John Leckie, Stuart Price
Recorded at: Real World Studios, Bath
Personnel: Bernard Sumner (vocals, guitar, synth, programming), Peter Hook (bass), Stephen Morris (drums, synths, prog), Phil Cunningham (synths, prog, guitars), Dawn Zee, Beatrice Hatherley, Ana Matronic (vocals)
Highest chart position: UK 5; US 46

"Krafty", produced by John Leckie. Despite the nod to Kraftwerk in the title – and the juddering synth bass that open the track – it's very much Joy Division reset in a major key. Hook's high-pitched bass guitar lines and the doomy, chiming guitars are reassuring in this context, and even Sumner's gauche lyrics ("*Out there the world is a beautiful place/With mountains, lakes and the human race*") can't ruin the melody.

TWO closing tracks ensure that the album ends on a high: "Turn" is an uplifting major-key love song that could have come from *Low-life*, while the unorthodox closer "Working Overtime" is based around a killer guitar riff, a tambourine-assisted drum stomp, a jabbering piano and a two-note bassline that's pitched somewhere between The Stooges' "1969" and Iggy Pop's "Lust For Life".

If the band sound less comfortable on the dancefloor-orientated electronic numbers it's possibly because Sumner, Hook and Morris were all pushing 50 and, by their own admission, didn't go to clubs any more. It's why the band entrusted two of the album's most obvious nods to the dancefloor to young-ish co-producer Stuart Price, who at this point had just emerged from high-profile associations with Madonna, The Killers and P Diddy. While Price had made no secret of his New Order obsession, both of his co-productions see the band ending up sounding like special guests on someone else's song. "Guilt Is A Useless Emotion" tries hard to work as a pulsating, high-energy rave anthem, but Sumner's vocal sounds like an afterthought that's been bolted on to the song's key components – the four-to-the-floor house beat and the insistent vocals of Dawn Zee and Beatrice Hatherley. Sumner also sounds like a reluctant guest artist on "Jetstream", a single dominated by Ana Matronic from Scissor Sisters and one co-written with her and Price. It's a more restrained and satisfyingly icy piece of synthpop, with a lyric that's presumably about a long-distance affair, but you get the impression that Stuart Price might have been better saving it for the next Madonna album. Also in a dance vein is the lumbering digital reggae of "I Told You So". "It starts as dancehall and ends up as The Velvet Underground," said Sumner, "and I like both." They'd end up turning the whole song into a rather more effective piece of Velvet Underground-style drone-rock on *Lost Sirens*.

Other songs outstay their welcome. "Morning Night And Day", co-produced with Stephen Street, starts with a wash of ambient guitar and synth effects, features an impressively squelchy synth bassline, but stays oddly static over its five-minute duration. "Dracula's Castle", co-produced with John Leckie, is a slightly confusing mix of doomy post-punk guitars, gothic piano arpeggios, pizzicato strings and daft lyrics.

Even at its worst, the album can set off nostalgic reveries in New Order fans of a certain age, but any younger listeners – piqued by the love being showered upon New Order by the likes of The Killers and Gwen Stefani – might be forgiven for wondering what the fuss was all about.

BEST OF ALL MIGHT BE THE LEAD SINGLE, "KRAFTY"... VERY MUCH JOY DIVISION RESET IN A MAJOR KEY

"TO GET AWAY WITH IT FOR THIS LONG IS AMAZING"

On the release of *Waiting For The Sirens' Call*, New Order accept the *NME*'s Godlike Genius award – prompting a meeting in the rural northwest and a discussion of legacy. "I'd rather be a living non-legend than a dead legend," Bernard Sumner tells **ALEX NEEDHAM**

NME 3/5/05

GODLIKE GENIUS comes in many forms, but none so strange as the guise it adopts this January afternoon in a muddy field near Macclesfield, Cheshire. Having been nearly knocked over by two panicked sheep, three middle-aged men and their younger accomplice struggle through rain and ankle-deep slurry towards Jodrell Bank telescope.

"It's like *Carry On Camping*, this!" shouts Peter Hook, a stocky man encased in denim with bleached blond hair swept back from his face. He's taking photographs on his phone ("Isn't technology wonderful!") of Bernard Sumner, a smaller, somewhat cherubic man behind him stuck helplessly on the roots of a tree, trying to find a way over the pools of rain and "goats' piss" that won't involve trashing his pristine trainers.

Stephen Morris, taller and surveying the proceedings with a world-weary air, is comparing the scene to the festivals he used to go to as a teenager. "My favourite one was at Buxton where the Hells Angels took it over," he says. "It was like a mini Altamont, only nobody actually got killed. All these Hells Angels were riding motorcycles about so I covered myself with bin liners and lay in the mud and pretended to be dead. This is what it was like, minus the Hells Angels. And acid. (To *NME*) You don't know you're born."

It could be an episode of *Last Of The Summer Wine* directed by Swedish gloommeister Ingmar Bergman. Instead it's New Order preparing to unleash themselves on public life again by being photographed in the settings that made them – the fields and factories of the northwest. Bad timing and worse weather scuppers the factory idea, so we're driving in a convoy of flash cars around Macclesfield where drummer Stephen Morris, sort-of-ex-member Gillian Gilbert, new member Phil Cunningham and Joy Division frontman Ian Curtis grew up. Peter 'Hooky' Hook hails from Salford, where he and Bernard Sumner grew up. The pair have known each other for 38 years. "You get less for murder," says Hooky in a pub, The Three Crowns, later on. "I met Bernard when I was 11 at secondary school on the first day and that was it. We were friends for about 10 minutes and I've hated him ever since, and he hates me. It's great. We're like family, you can't get rid of each other."

Those bonds have been put to the sternest of tests.

Death, drugs, burn-out, mutual hatred and financial catastrophe have all played their part in New Order's long and twisted saga. Their first group, Joy Division, ended on May 18, 1980 when singer Ian Curtis hanged himself. Adding keyboard player (and Stephen's girlfriend) Gillian Gilbert and cajoling Bernard into singing vocals, they soon regrouped as New Order, finding new inspiration in the electronic dance music just starting to transform club culture in New York.

ANDY WILLSHER/NME

New Order: Jodrell Bank, 2005

After a decade pursuing a path of perverse individualism, they somehow found themselves as one of the world's biggest cult bands, playing 25,000-capacity venues to crowds of hysterical Americans before it all came crashing down after their record company, Factory, went bankrupt in 1993. Given its epic qualities, it's no wonder that the story was immortalised in film, namely Michael Winterbottom's *24 Hour Party People*.

New Order looked as though they were finished after a succession of cocaine-fuelled arguments – about everything from writing credits to the "annoying" way Hooky ate a packet of crisps – culminated in Bernard saying to the bass player, "If I never see your face again it'll be too soon." (Hooky got in his car and cried; Bernard felt "relieved".) Eight years passed before New Order released another record, 2001's *Get Ready*. This time, there was one absentee, Gillian, who was nursing her and Stephen's daughter through a serious illness.

Now, Gillian has all but officially left the group and New Order have a new member, 30-year-old former Marion guitarist Phil Cunningham, who joined after playing on the *Get Ready* tour. There's a new album, too, *Waiting For The Sirens' Call*, meshing a trademark mix of rock and dance, joy and melancholia into a glittering whole they've not achieved so perfectly since 1989's classic *Technique*.

Nearly 28 years on from their first release as Joy Division, the "An Ideal For Living" EP, Hooky, Sumner and Morris have never been more relevant. Thanks to bands like Interpol and The Secret Machines, Joy Division loom as large over the musical landscape. Meanwhile, New Order's rock/dance hybrid prefigures bands like LCD Soundsystem and The Bravery. The Killers took their name from the 'ideal' band in the video to New Order's 2001 single "Crystal", while design-savvy Franz Ferdinand have learnt a lot from New Order's pioneering sleeves.

The group's attitude to this is one of tongue-in-cheek modesty. From the shelter of his Audi, Stephen jokes that The Killers are "our Frankensteinian creation. The trouble we had with names and they get a name and design concept straight out of the bag! We should consult our legal representatives... No, I couldn't be arsed, good luck to them." As for Interpol, "It'd be a right laugh seeing a Joy Division tribute band."

Hooky says he was asked to play bass with them, which he describes as "the ultimate irony".

Behind the jokes, however, all three admire the bands they've influenced. "If you listen to The Secret Machines or The Killers," says Hooky, "they're actually doing something pretty way out, the way we did when we were young."

"You've got to be influenced by someone," adds Bernard. "When we started doing Joy Division we were influenced by Iggy and Kraftwerk and The Velvet Underground – we couldn't have just started from Year Zero and made brilliant music, so I find it flattering hearing other people being influenced by various aspects of what we've done."

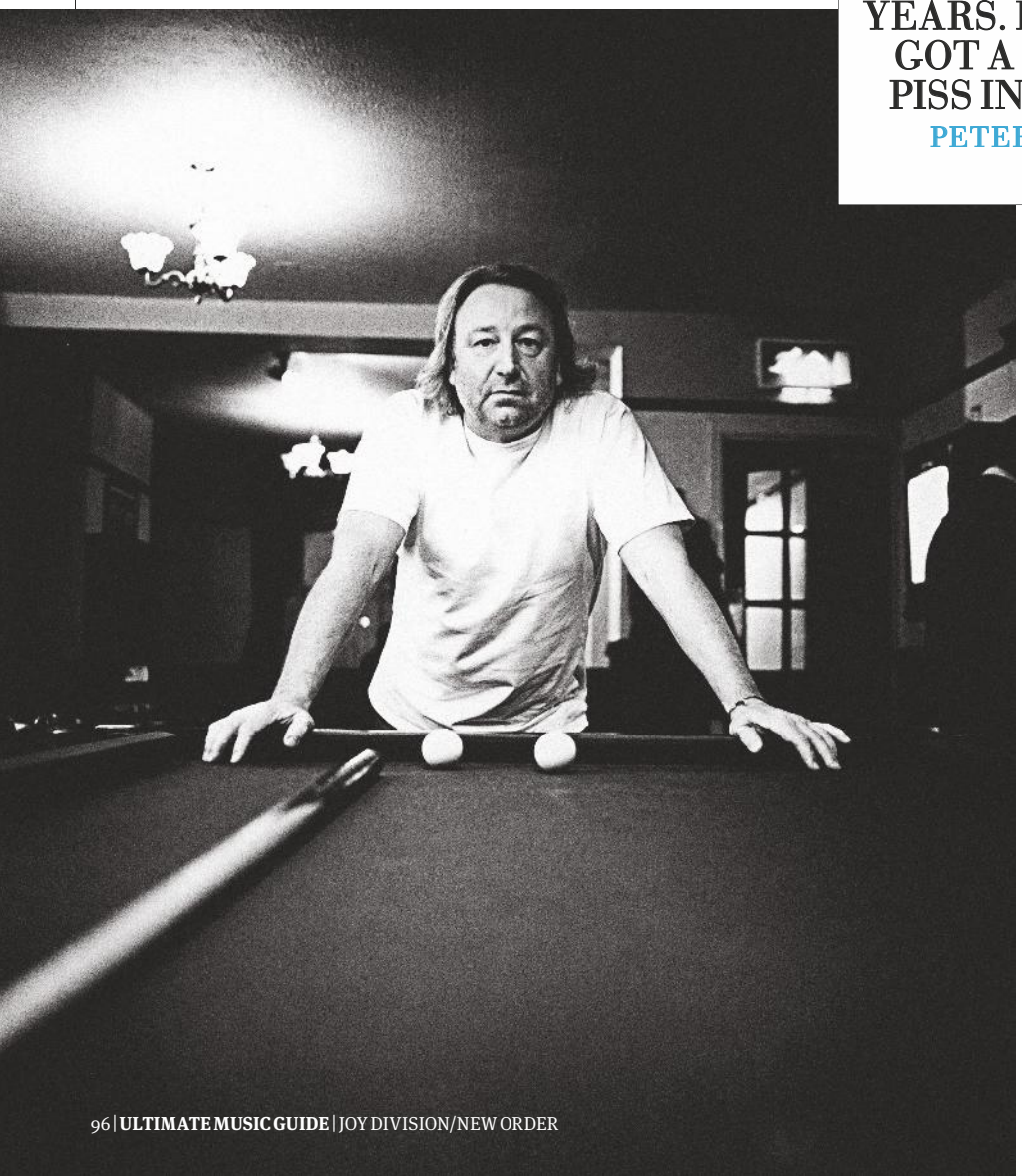
New Order's determination to base their operations in Manchester thus creating a flourishing musical culture, proudly independent from the capital, still exists today. Even reality TV owes a debt. Where would Bez be without the club they co-owned, the rave crucible the Haçienda?

Then there are the records, Joy Division's 1980 epitaph "Love Will Tear Us Apart" still sounds utterly compelling, and recently received the bizarre tribute of being named one of the five best singles of the last 25 years at the Brits (alongside Robbie Williams' "Angels"). "Blue Monday", released in 1983 and the best selling 12-in ever, is still a guaranteed floor-filler in indie discos and techno clubs alike, its astonishing afterlife prolonged by remixes from everyone from Michael Jackson producer Quincy Jones to Soulwax (a memorable mash-up with Kylie's "Can't Get You Out Of My Head"). Last week, after accepting their Godlike Genius prize at the *NME* Awards, New Order played them both, to an ecstatically appreciative audience including many of the bands they'd inspired. Their set was a revelation, the timeless, transcendent sound bearing almost no relation to the piss-taking ordinary, resolutely unstarry people making it.

> "INCREDIBLE, WE'VE HAD A FANTASTIC 27 YEARS. HAVEN'T GOT A POT TO PISS IN, MIND"
> PETER HOOK

However, the New Order story does include one bona fide rock legend – Ian Curtis. Rock music always canonises those who die young, but Curtis has passed into mythology. Two films about him are currently in production, while the iconography around him has inspired writers (from his widow Deborah's biography *Touching From A Distance* to Dennis Cooper's *Closer*) and other rock stars, notably Bono, have paid tribute to his "holy voice". The reason for this myth-making is first and foremost the dark brilliance of the records. Curtis had a deep, sonorous voice which, coupled with frenzied dancing (a dramatisation, or even symptom of the epilepsy he suffered), made him unique. Then there's the fact that he died. Like Kurt Cobain, his suicide seemed to underline the sincerity of what was already an oppressively bleak vision, though in truth marital and medical problems contributed more to his death. This year marks the 25th anniversary of *Closer*, Joy Division's frighteningly beautiful second album, released a month after Curtis' suicide. Its artwork, a tombstone, was the first step to building his legend, though Curtis had chosen the picture himself.

"Rob Gretton (New Order's late manager) always said that Joy Division would be bigger 10 years after the event than they ever were, just like The Doors," says Peter Hook, drinking an orange J20 later that afternoon as Bernard and Phil play pool. "It never stops, it amazes me. People say, 'Do you miss him?' and you don't because he's always there. He's not there in a physical sense but mentally and musically he's never gone. Which I'm really happy about."



ANDY WILLSHER/NME

Bernard Sumner: March 2005

As for being a rock legend, "He'd have loved it," says Stephen Morris. "Somewhere up there he's loving it. He was into the big mythic figures."

And as for the Brits, says Bernard, "He'd have thought we should have won it! He'd have gone down and kicked the fuck out of the others."

Was he ambitious?

"In a strange kind of explosive way," says Bernard, sipping a rum and black. "He was the most polite person you could ever meet and then if something annoyed him he'd explode into this ranting... We used to get into a discussion about politics or whatever and he'd go on a rant. We'd all wink and go, 'He's off on one.' And we'd gee him up, make him worse and he'd be off for three hours on this rant. He used to end up in hysterics and have to be taken off by men in yellow coats."

This isn't a figure of speech, either. Curtis had several epileptic episodes resulting in him being hospitalised. "But we found it extremely amusing," continues Bernard. "We could wind him up, but most of the time he was really good-natured. Enjoyed a prank. A lot of people get their impression of Ian from Kevin Cummins' *NME* photos of our rehearsal rooms where Ian's got his head in his hands and is unshaven and looks depressed. They think those photos captured his personality and they didn't. That was, I think, a week before he died and at that moment he was feeling really depressed. He was on very strong barbiturates to counteract his epilepsy and they affected him badly and obviously he was upset about his personal life (Curtis' wife was pregnant while he was having an affair). That particular moment that was what he was like. But in the preceding five years or whatever, it wasn't like that at all. He'd have a laugh and we'd laugh with him."

Does his canonisation annoy you?

"If he wasn't as talented as they say he is, it would, but I knew him and he was a really talented, bright guy," continues Bernard. "He was a friend and I want people to remember what Ian did. With us, he wrote some great songs. People build him up into a legend, but that happens with people who die young. I'd rather be a living non-legend than a dead legend but you're about to make me a legend, aren't you?" he smiles. "So maybe we'll have to top ourselves."

Even without their pre-history, New Order would still be legends. "Blue Monday" was a radical direction change that accidentally altered the course of music. The band have mixed feelings about it. Stephen says, "I just remember seeing the bloody Troggs in the early '80s in Sweden and they played "Wild Thing" at least three times and I thought, 'It must be terrible to have to do that.' It's turned into our 'Wild Thing'.

"I actually call it 'Fucking Blue Monday' now because I'm sick of it," adds Bernard. "It was just the right sound at the right time. We were making Joy Division-type music and then when Ian died, it became impossible. For some reason we ended up spending a lot of time in New York where we used to go out clubbing and get exposed to all this music. It was all Sugar Hill Records and Rocker's Revenge, 'Walking On Sunshine'. You thought, 'Wouldn't it be great to hear your record in one of these clubs?' And they were playing stuff like The Clash's 'Rock The Casbah' and Soft Cell, 'Tainted Love'. So just going to these clubs and knowing something about technology... We'd started using it in Joy Division as we were into Kraftwerk. Then we heard dance music and thought, 'Wow, we could do that with our electronics.'"

That wasn't the only extraordinary thing about "Blue Monday". In a story that's passed into legend the floppy disc sleeve was so expensive to produce that the band ended up losing 10p on every copy. Nothing better sums up the perverse methods of New Order and Factory Records – they were willing to make commercially suicidal decisions for the sake of art, or sometimes just to be awkward. Eventually, Factory's quixotic attitude to business led to them going bankrupt and leaving New Order out of pocket and at each others throats. Today, their attitudes to label boss Tony Wilson are ambivalent: Bernard and Hooky seem quite warmly disposed but the best that Stephen can say is, "If we saw him I'm sure we'd say, 'Hello'." He advises bands not to sign to Wilson's new label "without consulting at least one lawyer and an insolvency expert!"

"We never had any pressure to write hit records. We never thought, 'Have we recouped?' We didn't care because we were having a great time and we were a bunch of lads having a party 24 hours a day. But it got to the point where you were burning out and you did start thinking, 'Why are we so far from home again?' and, 'Where's all the money gone?' That's when it got serious."

Bernard's burn-out was a literal one. On tour in 1993, he had to be hospitalised in Chicago after it turned out that hectic partying had burned out his stomach lining. These days he claims that he only drinks when he's working, while Stephen's near-teetotal: "I think you've only got your capacity to be off your head so many times and I've used up my allocation."

New boy Phil, however, says that a New Order tour can still show younger bands a few things in terms of on-the-road excess: "I've been in bands before and hammered it, but touring with New Order pushes it onto the next level. They know some dodgy characters, I can tell you." Regarded by some fans as an interloper, Phil points out that he's now been in New Order for four years, as long as Joy Division's entire lifespan. As to whether he's actually replaced Gillian in New Order, "It's a weird one. We haven't talked about what's happening, in typical northern male fashion. It's almost like I've just been accepted as part of the band and we're just carrying on making music, which is great." He's contributed to every track on *Waiting For The Sirens' Call*, and also to the eight further songs they've worked on for a second album, due to come out next year.

The result has been the revitalisation of one of our most important bands, the epitome of northern cool and undisputed Godlike Geniuses. "It's incredible," says Hooky. "We've had a fantastic 27 years. Haven't got a pot to piss in, mind. Got a great sports car, spent it all on that but to get away with it for this long is amazing." As for the history, "I'm immensely proud of it. It doesn't bother me at all. It doesn't bother Bernard. We don't see Joy Division as a different group apart from not having Ian there physically, that's the only difference. He's still there mentally. Spiritually."

ANDY WILLSHER/NME

NEW ORDER

LOST SIRENS

Even second time around, the Sirens can't run New Order aground. Peter Hook's farewell proves musically harmonious. | *By* **PIERS MARTIN**

LOST SIRENS is a curious little album that rounds off a wretched period for New Order in a fairly elegant manner. As the title suggests, the record is comprised of material left over from the band's productive sessions for *Waiting For The Sirens' Call*, when they racked up a £700,000 recording bill at Real World studios in Bath during 2003 and 2004. The initial idea had been to maintain momentum by following that 2005 release with another album made up of these seven songs plus a few new numbers that they'd knock out soon after, but by then relations between Peter Hook and the rest of the band had deteriorated to the point where it proved impossible to get them in a studio together. *Lost Sirens* is notable for being the last New Order album that Peter Hook plays on.

According to Bernard Sumner, when the band tried to arrange sessions to complete the extra tracks, Hook chose not to attend. "We were going to write another three songs and we'd have a finished album," Sumner told reporters at the time. "He [*Hook*] refused to come to the writing sessions and was busy DJing." Hook by this point had become something of a celebrity DJ, trading on his fame at indie-dance nights playing New Order remixes to students, claiming it had become his "main stock and trade".

"Once the novelty of getting pissed for nothing had worn off, I actually found that it was a very enjoyable thing to do," Hook has said. "It's completely opposite to being in a group. When you DJ, you're just on your own, which is nice because there's no argument."

CRITICS' VERDICTS

"The default formula here is still beefy lad-rock, pedestrian tunes and lyrical banalities. But there are enough signs to whet the appetite for New Order's next studio album, reportedly due sometime this year." STEPHEN DALTON, UNCUT, MARCH 2013

"'Shake It Up' cracks out some old-school NO beats and a 'Confusion'-daft refrain, but it all feels a bit superfluous." EMILY MACKAY, NME, 19/01/13

As the saga dragged on, with both parties attempting to further tarnish New Order's legacy, Hook announced in a 2007 radio interview that he was no longer working with Sumner, effectively signalling his departure from the band. Sumner too had stepped away from New Order in 2008 to focus his attention on Bad Lieutenant, a short-lived bloke-rock outfit, named after an Abel Ferrara film, that featured Jake Evans and recent New Order recruit Phil Cunningham playing alongside Steven Morris and Tom Chapman, who would go on to replace Hook in New Order. Bad Lieutenant's sole album, 2009's *Never Cry Another Tear*, didn't quite fill that New Order-shaped hole, but the members' companionship led to New Order reappearing in 2011 with the lineup that continues today.

By the time the inter-band copyright issues had been ironed out, this current incarnation of New Order had been active for 18 months, so the decision to finally release *Lost Sirens* in January 2013, nine years after the songs were recorded, suggests a desire by everyone involved to draw a line under that messy phase of the band, to move on and focus on the positives, of which *Lost Sirens*, a modest and classy collection, is undoubtedly one. New Order were between deals at the time, so the Warner reissue imprint Rhino picked up the release, the songs having been recorded while the group were under contract with Warner subsidiary London.

In some ways the long gap between *Waiting For The Sirens' Call* and this set works in *Lost Sirens*' favour. Its parent album was the sound of a band slogging away, struggling for direction and identity; by casting these new songs in a different light, framing them as a concise and more playful alternative, it's almost as if the tracks on *Lost Sirens* have

TRACK MARKS

1 I'll Stay With You ★★★★★
2 Sugarcane ★★★★
3 Recoil ★★★★
4 Californian Grass ★★★★
5 Hellbent ★★★
6 Shake It Up ★★★
7 I've Got A Feeling ★★★
8 I Told You So (Crazy World Mix) ★★★★

Label: Rhino
Produced by: Tore Johansson, New Order, Stuart Price, Mac Quayle, Jim Spencer, Stephen Street
Recorded at: Real World Studios
Personnel includes: Bernard Sumner (vocals, guitar, keyboards), Peter Hook (bass), Stephen Morris (drums, electronics), Phil Cunningham (guitar)
Highest chart position: UK 23; US 174

been blessed by being excluded from *Lost Sirens*. It's difficult to fathom how the first two songs, "I'll Stay With You" and "Sugarcane", were left off that record when they're as sprightly and nuanced as anything from *Republic*, or perhaps their directness didn't quite fit whatever it was New Order intended *Waiting...* to be.

"I'll Stay With You" is one of New Order's finest singles this century, a plaintive Sumner lyric delivered over Kraftwerk shimmers and Smiths-like jangling, plus a Hook-thrummed middle-eight; a classic in the vein of "Everything's Gone Green" and "Regret". "Sugarcane" is as sticky-sweet as its title, a throwaway synthpop cut with a piano-house breakdown and singalong chorus tinged with melancholy in the way Sumner sings, "*It's another day in the life of a superstar/It's gotta be the way, it's the same, no matter who you are*". A little too upbeat and obvious for *Waiting...*, on *Lost Sirens*, which shows the sunnier side of New Order, it fits right in.

THE lovely "Recoil" is a snaking Bacharach samba, the kind of New Order number on the verge of crumbling because of Sumner's crestfallen delivery, and here, after he sings, "*You know I can't change the way that you want me to be*", the song spirits away in a sort of blissful Laurel Canyon groove. What's clear during *Lost Sirens*' 38 minutes is that this is not the streamlined techno-pop version of New Order – that would come next with *Music Complete* – but rather Sumner's sardonic humour and crumpled uncertainty gives the collection an air of vulnerability. "*My cold heart needs some company*", he sings on "Californian Grass", an arching ballad with a chorus that evokes the cresting pleasure of getting high, before purring: "*Give me all that I ask, some Californian grass/Bring it over to me, I want everything that I see*". The state's cannabis producers are missing a trick not licensing this.

The quality dips after this first side, with "Shake It Up" and "I've Got A Feeling" floundering in a big-beat dad-funk stew as New Order grasp on to clichés and write songs around them. "Hellbent" echoes The Cure's "A Forest" in its closing passage, with Hook's bass snaking around a Numan-ish piano coda. Sumner seems remorseful here, though it's hard to believe these lines are about Hook: "*You and me were like the thieves of the town.../I'm not trying to say I'm sorry/You're the star in the scene, you're not just anybody*". Most revealing is the final track, a new version – the "Crazy World Mix" – of *Waiting...* track "I Told You So". The death-rattle churn of the clunky original is brought to the fore to transform this into a bluesy homage to the Velvets' "Venus In Furs" that matches the menace in Sumner's growl. It's a vast improvement. *Lost Sirens*, then, is a surprisingly dignified way for Hook to bow out of New Order – his swansong could have been a lot worse – and serves to paint a fairly rosy picture of a fine band functioning somewhere near their best. Those sirens did indeed call out, and New Order just about avoided wrecking themselves.

LOST SIRENS IS A SURPRISINGLY DIGNIFIED WAY FOR HOOK TO BOW OUT OF NEW ORDER

JOY DIVISION & NEW ORDER

BOOKS & FILMS

Extensive histories and artful biopics; Joy Division and New Order documented on page and screen. | *By* **TERRY STAUNTON**

IN his 2007 Bernard Sumner biography **CONFUSION**, Manchester-based writer David Nolan blurred the lines between the definitions of authorised and unauthorised books. The New Order frontman declined to be directly involved in the project, but agreed to cast an eye over any advance passages he was sent and clarify the veracity or otherwise of the information they contained. Many of Sumner's responses were subsequently published as sidebars or footnotes in the same pages as Nolan's text, although they didn't always result in a clearer version of events, especially those relating to Joy Division. "That's just not true, never happened," he declares on more than one occasion. "Leave it in."

The musician's playful attitude to his own past arguably suggests he's content to perpetuate the mythology that inevitably builds around any band that invites even a modicum of intrigue. In journalist Jon Savage's 2019 oral history **JOY DIVISION: THIS SEARING LIGHT, THE SUN AND EVERYTHING ELSE**, archived from more than 40 years of interviews, the surviving members of the group, Factory boss Tony Wilson and various Manchester music scene figures frequently contradict each other.

It was ever thus. When Peter Hook was asked about Sumner's own 2014 autobiography **CHAPTER AND VERSE**, he said: "Book stores won't know whether to file it under fantasy or tragedy." The estranged bassist has never been shy about sharing his opinions, as evidenced in three volumes of memoir: **THE HAÇIENDA: HOW NOT TO RUN A NIGHTCLUB** (2010), **UNKNOWN PLEASURES: INSIDE JOY DIVISION** (2012), and **SUBSTANCE: INSIDE NEW ORDER** (2016) offer a combined total of 1,500 pages of Hooky wisdom. He writes in the conversational prose of a seasoned raconteur although, since all three appeared after he and Sumner parted ways, the intermittent backbiting often makes it difficult to separate irrefutable truth from salacious yarn.

Drummer Stephen Morris's contribution to these groaning shelves is less incendiary, but since 2019's **RECORD PLAY PAUSE: CONFESSIONS OF A POST-PUNK PERCUSSIONIST** is only the first book he has planned ("the bits before Joy Division and Warsaw," he told *NME*, "about how you end up wanting to be in a band in the first place"), perhaps future tomes will find it difficult not to muddy the waters even further.

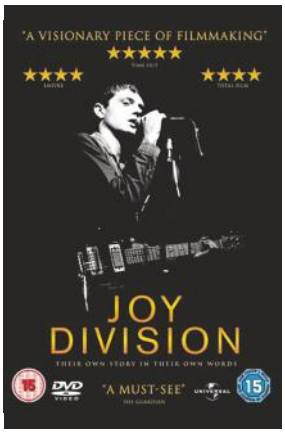
Ultimately, it's Savage's lovingly curated offering that paints the most vivid and reliable portrait of the group, due to the sheer number of participants. Wilson in particular, never a stranger to well-heeled quote, speaks articulately from both the coal face and with an overview informed by hindsight.

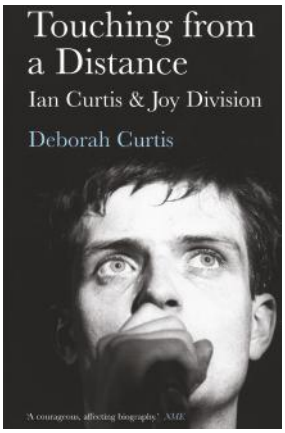
"It's a fabulous story," he says, "the story of a tragic suicide, a moral story and a cultural, academic, intellectual aesthetic story, but at the heart of it, it's only here because they wrote great songs, and great songs never die."

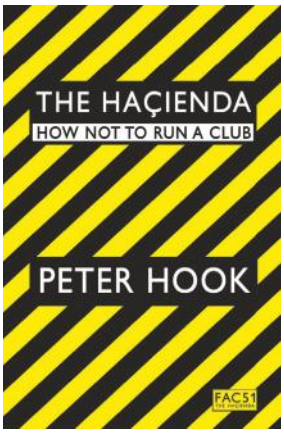
Set aside from all the above and warranting a different kind of attention, however, is **TOUCHING FROM A DISTANCE**, Ian Curtis's widow Deborah's 1995 book that indirectly dispels most of the myths surrounding Joy Division by largely ignoring them. While her husband gets swept up in the dizzying world of the music industry and its clichés (not least the acquisition of a foreign girlfriend), Deborah's focus is on home life in Macclesfield, raising the couple's child and paying the bills.

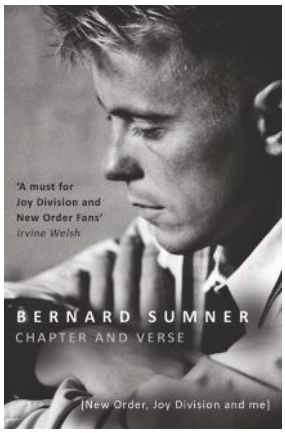
The picture that emerges of Curtis is of a troubled man, capable of both tenderness and shocking cruelty; a reluctant star for whom the spotlight became an unwelcome adjunct to his fragile health. It would eventually form the basis of **CONTROL**, photographer-turned-filmmaker Anton Corbijn's stark, monochrome biopic released to universal acclaim in 2007.

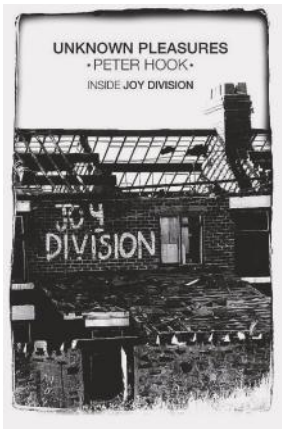
Having taken numerous, now familiar, pictures of Joy Division for the music press of the day, Corbijn was ideally placed to flesh out the atmosphere of the times and the iconography of the band itself, while remaining true to the more personal aspects of Curtis's life. He perfectly

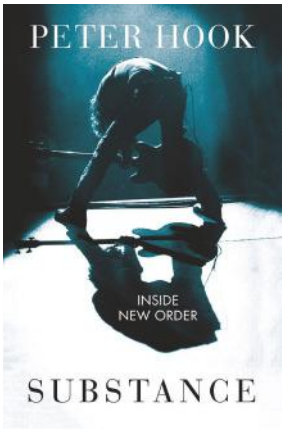


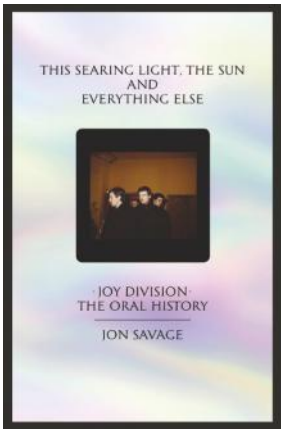


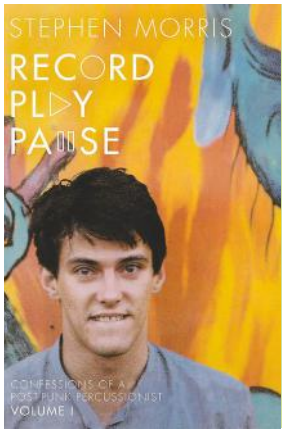












captures both the grime and questionable grandeur of Manchester, fashioning an evocative backdrop for what is, when all is said and done, an innately human story about a young couple.

Sam Riley's portrayal of Curtis is astonishing; nuanced and underplayed, impressively assembled from relatively little archive footage of the singer. It won him the most promising newcomer accolade at the British Independent Film Awards and a nomination in Bafta's rising star category. He's matched every step of the way by Samantha Morton as Deborah, the oft-forgotten victim of circumstances that proved to be beyond both her and her young husband's control.

Curiously, Riley had also appeared in an earlier film that touched upon both Joy Division and New Order, playing The Fall leader Mark E Smith in a brief cameo in **24 HOUR PARTY PEOPLE** (2002), director Michael Winterbottom's stylised account of the rise and fall of Factory Records. Here, Curtis's pained life takes up comparatively little screen time, culminating in a scene at his funeral where Tony Wilson (as played by Steve Coogan with constant recourse to arch asides to the viewing audience) fancifully describes the singer as "the musical equivalent of Che Guevara".

Subsequently, New Order enter the fray of the film's idiosyncratic narrative, albeit in essentially comic self-contained set-pieces. An exasperated Sumner (John Simm) tears his hair out while trying to corral the more unruly elements of Happy Mondays while producing their single "Freaky Dancin'". Even greater hilarity ensues in a scene where New Order manager Rob Gretton (Paddy Considine) physically attacks Wilson after learning the Factory supremo has blown £30,000 of what is to all intents and purposes the band's money on a designer table for the company boardroom.

Pitched somewhere between the bleak reality of *Control* and Winterbottom's colourful japes is director Grant Gee's powerful 2008 documentary **JOY DIVISION**, an affectionate timeline of the group's short life with pointed references to the environment that spawned them (journalist Paul Morley describes the band as "a science-fiction interpretation of Manchester"). Talking heads interviews are woven into TV and newsreel footage that fleshes out not just their importance at the moment of Curtis's death in May, 1980, but their continued relevance today.

It's a given that more accounts of these places and times will follow (Morris has already begun work on his second book), but it's debatable as to whether any will be as satisfying and responsible as either Savage's far-reaching collage of quotes or Gee's striking images.

TRACK MARKS

BOOKS

DEBORAH CURTIS
TOUCHING FROM A DISTANCE
Faber, 1995
★★★★

PETER HOOK
THE HAÇIENDA: HOW NOT TO RUN A NIGHTCLUB
Simon & Schuster, 2010
★★★

BERNARD SUMNER
CHAPTER AND VERSE
Corgi, 2012
★★★★

PETER HOOK
UNKNOWN PLEASURES: INSIDE JOY DIVISION
Simon & Schuster, 2012
★★★

PETER HOOK
SUBSTANCE: INSIDE NEW ORDER
Simon & Schuster, 2016
★★★

JON SAVAGE
THIS SEARING LIGHT, THE SUN AND EVERYTHING ELSE
Faber, 2019
★★★★★

STEPHEN MORRIS
RECORD PLAY PAUSE: CONFESSIONS OF A POST-PUNK PERCUSSIONIST
Constable, 2019
★★★

FILMS

24 HOUR PARTY PEOPLE
Dir: Michael Winterbottom, 2002
★★★

JOY DIVISION
Dir: Grant Gee, 2007
★★★★

CONTROL
Dir: Anton Corbijn, 2007
★★★★

"I'm always up for a challenge": Sumner fronts a reactivated, reconfigured New Order at Bestival on the Isle Of Wight, September 8, 2012

"ARE YOU A GOOD PERSON, OR ARE YOU A TWAT?"

Bernard Sumner has dealt with both kinds. On publication of his memoir, *Chapter And Verse*, he meets *Uncut* to discuss Ian Curtis, scooters, Santana and his former colleague Peter Hook. "He likes the attention," he tells **JOHN ROBINSON**. "I think he resented the fact he wasn't the singer in New Order."

BERNARD SUMNER meets *Uncut* wearing the all-purpose attire of the downtime celebrity: nondescript baseball cap, dark glasses, neither of which he removes. He drives a black Mercedes sports car – as it turns out, at considerable speed, allowing his passenger to experience the picturesque environs of this semi-rural, footballery part of Cheshire as a rapid montage of looming, ivy-covered walls, concealed entrances and tight turns. The white-knuckle journey to a suitably quiet and interview-friendly pub is made additionally piquant by the driver's jetlagged yawning.

"Hot, isn't it," he says, this most amiable and un-starry musician. "Should have worn shorts."

We meet Bernard in July, just returned from America, where New Order have played a short two-week tour of sold-out, big theatre dates. These followed the band's recent trip to South America, where the band played as part of a Lollapalooza bill and debuted two new songs, "Plastic", and "Singularity". They hope to have a new album in the shops in the spring. When it arrives, it will be on Mute.

Bernard, though, is in a retrospective frame of mind, as – not uncommon among musicians from the north-west in the past year or two – he has written a memoir, *Chapter And Verse*. The book covers his early life in working-class Salford, where he lived with his stepfather, his disabled mother and her parents, and how this impacted on his music. It details the short life of Joy Division, and the saga of Factory and the Haçienda. It is great, particularly, on the career of New Order. When it goes right, as it has for the band's albums and wonderful standalone singles, it can feel transcendent, the Man-Machine running smoothly, with a loved-up attitude.

Still, New Order's recent history hasn't been completely untroubled. In 2007, the group's original bassist, Peter Hook, departed the group in a strange and fairly acrimonious manner. Tension had been growing since Hook bought from the nightclub's receivers the name and trademarks of the Haçienda, and escalated to a point where Hook announced the band had split. While Bernard is unwilling to get drawn into a war of words, he's able to address some elements of Hook's departure.

***UNCUT*: Does it feel unusual to be making New Order music without Peter Hook?**

BERNARD SUMNER: No, it doesn't, because he was in the position where he didn't like being with us particularly. There was this resentment directed at me in the last couple of years, and I don't miss that. I think he lost the trust of the band when he bought the name of the Haçienda. Let me get this right – we didn't push him out of the band. He claimed that the band had split up, without consulting the band. He seemed to be hating it, particularly hating me.

Why? I don't know. I think he always felt everyone always sided with me. But that may be because my ideas were a bit more rational, and were less business-orientated. I think when Rob [*Gretton, New Order manager*] died [*in 1999*], he saw it then as a chance to seize power in the band. I think he may have felt that I felt the same way, but I didn't.

How else did you differ? He wasn't particularly interested in being in the studio and loved playing live – and I preferred being in the studio, that way. Perhaps he wasn't that interested in electronic music, and wanted to make music of a more throbbing nature, shall we say. I just think that he's very competitive, and I'm not really – and he couldn't stand that. I could be a miserable c--- on tour – because I didn't want to be on tour with him.

He's had a lot of bands, hasn't he? Do you think he likes keeping busy? I think he

ROBBALL/WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES

resented the fact that he wasn't the singer in New Order. I didn't fight for the role – it was Rob who decided I should be the singer, and I'm always up for a challenge. I just thought, 'OK, why not? Maybe I'll learn something.' I think Hooky likes attention.

Can you remember why you were friends, though? Yes. Because we were both at the bottom of the class. We sat together. It wasn't because there was any great musical enlightenment that we shared, we were the scum at the back of the class.

Your book makes Salford sound terrifying back then. Kids would sometimes find swords up the chimneys when houses had been pulled down – they'd been hidden there when soldiers returned from the Crimean war. If you walked down the wrong street there was a chance you'd be chased by a gang – and if you were really unlucky, that gang would have a sword or two.

Just the couple of swords. I don't think I put in the book about the spears. When I was a scooter boy, me and Hooky got chased by a gang near Salford precinct. They must have broken into a school or something and taken all the javelins. It didn't happen all the time, but there was violence.

[*The food we ordered has arrived. Bernard adopts an exaggeratedly regional accent*].

There weren't no goose liver parfait then. Nor no beetroot salad, neither.

You weren't in just one subculture. You were a suedehead on a scooter, who liked Santana. That was unusual. We went to a youth club called North Salford – they had a music room where they would play Stax, Tamla and ska – basically black dance music. And then in the room above they had a stereo and they would play Free, Santana and The Rolling Stones. So you could go between the two.

Were scooters a big deal? You were either a rocker or a scooter boy. I remember being told as a scooter boy – "Don't ever go to Macclesfield, it's full of greasers. It's weird there." And then I ended up forming a band with two guys from Macclesfield. And a girl, of course. It was better than getting a bus, and good for attracting girls because it made you look cool. It wasn't mod. It was post-mod: the first wave of skinheads going into suedeheads.

Were you one of those people primed for punk? I was quite happy with the music I was listening to, but the people that made it were remote. When punk came along, we felt that these working-class scumbags we could relate to. It felt like it belonged to us. Of course, it didn't. But with the Sex Pistols, you knew they were just a bunch of working-class twats like we were. There was a great energy to it, which felt like a renewal. I was going to say it wasn't a revolution in the sound of music, but it was, because it took it back to its basic elements.

What was Ian Curtis into? He had a different set of influences from us, and he worked in a record shop. He liked The Doors, The Stooges, The Velvet Underground. I met him in clubs. I went round his house and *The Idiot* had come out that day [*March 1977*] and he said, "Listen to this, listen to this..." and he played "China Girl" and I was an immediate convert to Iggy Pop. Ian loved Love. He had great taste in music.

Joy Division is a band with a very heavy story and mythology. With the films and so on, do you ever think, 'Was that really me?' People's understanding of people in bands can make them out to be some sort of caricature, but it's not that. People have more subtle hues to their personality.

You tried past-life regression with Ian, didn't you? He seemed to have got himself into a mental lockdown about the situation he was in – not a bizarre love triangle, but a distressing love triangle. He was torn between his wife and daughter and Annik [*Honoré, Belgian journalist*]. He didn't know what to do, he was always asking people what to do – he didn't want the responsibility of the decision. But it was a question only he could answer. He seemed locked in indecision – and the longer he was locked in indecision, the more harm it was doing him mentally. I guess the hypnotism was a juvenile attempt to clear the blockage and find out what he should do.

"He was an extremist": Curtis and Sumner at Bowdon Vale Youth Club, March 14 1979

> "I READ A BOOK ABOUT HYPNOTIC REGRESSION. I TRIED IT OUT ON IAN AND IT WORKED"
> BERNARD SUMNER

You taped the session. The tape ended up with Debbie [*Curtis, Ian's widow*], and she gave it back to me. I couldn't bring myself to listen to it, but I had it transcribed and found it fascinating. He mentioned the Hundred Years War. I think he mentioned the name of the law firm he worked for.

How did you get into all that kind of thing? I read a book on hypnotism, before I knew Ian. We used to do it when we were hanging out in people's houses. You could stick a pin in someone's hand and no blood would come out. It was weird. Then I read a book about hypnotic regression – a couple of books, actually. I tried it out on Ian and it worked. I did it twice actually, once at rehearsals and once at my house. I just thought it may help him in some way. One of the books was about how your problems in current life are caused by problems in your past life. I thought I'd give it a go. It didn't sort him out, though. I never did it to anyone else after what happened to Ian, because it made me a bit paranoid about it.

You were about to go on tour with someone who had just tried to commit suicide... I spent two weeks with him before he died. I remember talking about the first time he attempted suicide. We got the bus back to Peel Green where I lived then and purposefully walked through the cemetery to try and bring it home to him, the reality of death. I got this idea that it had become a fantasy in his head about dying. His lyrics came from fantasy, and he would often talk about things in unrealistic ways. I thought it might bring the reality of being dead to life. "This could have been you."

You didn't think he'd try suicide again? He was an extremist, he always wanted the music to be manic and extreme. He always wanted to push it as far as possible. We didn't think he would commit suicide, so when he did, even though he tried it once before, it was a total shock. I felt depressed and sad and angry, frustrated and confused.

It was the end of the band. There was some anger in the band that he'd done that. You may have your own hardships, but you're not torn apart like that person. You don't have the problems they have, they're tortured souls, you're not. So you're angry in a selfish way, because you've done so much work.

Do you think Ian was still into it? He really wanted to be successful in a band – he went apeshit at me once for taking a holiday because it was getting in the way and was slowing things down. But when he got what he wanted, he realised he didn't want the reality of it. He wanted to leave and set up a corner bookshop, then a couple of days later would change his mind. But he was a good person, basically. He wasn't a twat. And that's how you should judge people – are you a good person? Or are you a twat?

How did you manage to make moving on a positive thing? It was like climbing up a mountain. You'd got up so far, then the rope you'd used was cut away – you could only use the rope that was ahead of you. We didn't have any choice but to carry on. Plus we'd had a taste of it – we really liked being in a band. One of my prime motivations was to have fun – regardless of all the emotional pain, being in a band was a good way of having fun.

An interesting image of the period is you with a soldering iron – building the future.

MARTIN O'NEILL/REDFERNS

Sumner on stage at the Manhattan Club, Leuven, Belgium, December 17, 1985; (inset) "True Faith (Remix)" 12in sleeve

There were a couple of reasons for that. We could hear this exciting technical music, but the technology you needed – we couldn't afford it. The other was that I suffered really badly from insomnia. The choice was either, listen to Truckers' Hour, or get my soldering iron out. There was a magazine called *Electronics Today*, which had a thing in it one day – "Build your own synth". I ordered the kit. I built the sequencer that drove the instruments on "Blue Monday" and the vocoder I used on "Blue Monday".

How did you write? The less we thought about it, the better the music was. The best thing to do was talk about what we watched on telly the night before until we were extremely bored, then pick up our instruments and start playing. Then we'd write good music. We didn't think about success. Our prime motivation was to have fun. The more success you get, you'll be more famous, you won't be able to get up to what you get up to – I'll leave that to your imagination – because the papers will start writing about it.

When did you feel you were getting somewhere? Success for us was to write a song and say, yes, that's progressed from where we were two months ago. We'd get in clubs free, get drinks tickets... meet a lot of nice young ladies. And travel the world having fun with our friends. We had the right face in the right place at the right time.

You were clear that it was about experimenting with the new technology... The acoustic songs would be jammed. The electronic ones, the aim was to make it sound like it emanated from machines, not human beings, because that's the aspect of Giorgio Moroder's work that we liked. I'm not saying it's better – but it sounded fresher to us if it sounded like a machine had written it. There was a popular misconception at the time, that you could hit a button, press 'record' and a hit record would come out. It's not like that at all: if you put shit in, you get shit out.

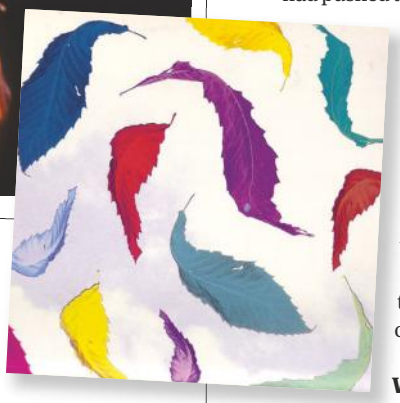
You hit an extraordinary run of form from *Brotherhood* to "True Faith/1963". What was your secret? We were on a roll, maybe more confident in ourselves. Stephen Hague did a great job, but we worked with producers primarily so they could take the shit, be diplomats, politicians in the band. Instead of me saying, "Hooky, can you turn your bass down a little bit?", Stephen would ask him to do it.

You revived the idea that singles should stand alone from albums. We didn't really understand why a single had to be on an album, we thought it was boring. You could buy a single and buy an album – Factory didn't really give a fuck. "True Faith/1963" is something that blows everything I've said in this interview out of the water.

How so? It was a time when I set out to write a hit single. I think we got a rather large tax bill, and we sat down with Stephen Hague to write a Top 40 hit. I had an idea for a bassline, Gillian had some string ideas, Stephen got some drums down. When we got the track going, I was sent off to the flat we had in London with a bottle of Pernod and told not to show my face again until I'd written the lyrics. We had "1963" as well, so I wrote them one after another. I did one one day, the other the next – I didn't like being in the flat on my own.

Did you think it was as good as it is? I thought, it's another song. It's not good to look directly into the sun, you know? You should just carry on with what you're doing.

You mentioned Factory. That and the Haçienda were and are such exciting ideas – but do you resent the fact that you were footing the bill? I resent the fuck out of it. There's a lot of stupidity went down – it could have been done in a cleverer way and in a more businesslike fashion. We came from punk, and Tony [*Wilson*] believed in anarchy, so it was done according to the anarchist's handbook. We did lose a hell of a lot of money, but the success outweighs the loss. What's the opposite word to success?



Failure. Well, it wasn't a failure. It was a cultural experiment that cost us dearly. We lost a lot of money, but you know what? I'm not skint – I've got everything I want. Just done two great tours, so rather than cry over spilt milk, I concentrate on the present, which is great – what's done is done.

In your book you identify good New Order gigs and also bad ones... The worst gig we ever played was in a place called Aarhus in Denmark. We were playing with Miles Davis – Miles played for longer than he should have, and we'd been drinking. So by the time we went on we were drunk – and Gillian was very drunk. Someone had pushed the pitch wheel up and sent her whole synth up a semitone – the worst interval in music. She was so pissed she didn't notice she was playing a semitone above everyone else. I was trying to pitch between the synth and the band, and it was just terrible. We were drunk, out of tune, really terrible. The police had to be called for our own protection.

Was drink often your undoing? We used to get too drunk... we'd be completely shitfaced on stage. We also used to do the set before we went on stage, so we'd either put a bum set together that just didn't work, like all the tempos and keys would clash. Or we'd put in a song we hadn't rehearsed for five years. On top of that, we'd be really drunk. After about 28 years, we sussed this was a problem, and rectified things by playing pretty much the same set, but changing a couple of songs in it.

One of the things I like about New Order is that you've not seemed to have to change who you are to get to the level you're at. Would you agree? That goes back to the whole point about punk – that anyone can do this. You've got to know what's good – and I believe if you've got a great love for music, if you can hear a piece of music and find it earth-shatteringly beautiful – you can reverse the process, like a mirror. You can reverse it and make music like that after a period of time learning a certain set of skills.

What do you want from New Order in the future? You can't reinvent the wheel, can you, but we did to a certain extent with "Blue Monday". To reinvent music is a bit of a tall order. When we wrote "Blue Monday" and "Everything's Gone Green", it was the future, weird and new. Electronic music isn't the future any more, is it? It's the present.

As Bernard drives me back to the station, he chats about the family time he has for the next few weeks, and his plans for the rest of this extremely pleasant day. "Feels like a barbecue night tonight," he says, this person who can with some justification claim to have altered the course of music. "Think I'll drop by the supermarket in a bit." After that, he thinks, a well-earned rest before dinner. "Get on a lounger with my Speedos on," he grins. "Not a pretty sight."

GIEKNAEPS/GETTY IMAGES

NEW ORDER

MUSIC COMPLETE

A decade passes. Enter a new New Order (and friends): titanic, pastiche-free and bang up to date. | *by* **DAVID QUANTICK**

SOME Manchester bands have been known to indulge in long gaps between albums. The Stone Roses left five years between their first two efforts while ex-Factory act The Distractions opted for a 32-year gap between debut and follow-up. In comparison, New Order's hiatus of 10 years between 2005's *Waiting For The Siren's Call* and *Music Complete* – not counting the archival *Lost Sirens* – seems minor, but it did encompass major changes in the band's circumstances. Bernard Sumner formed Bad Lieutenant with Stephen Morris and Phil Cunningham for one album, Gillian Gilbert returned, and Peter Hook left, to be replaced by Bad Lieutenant's Tom Chapman. And New Order, refreshed, revitalised and on the road again, released their most critically and commercially successful album in years.

There comes a time for most bands who've been around for a few decades to release an album which sounds like an audio collage of their best bits, with nods to each phase of their career. What's odd about *Music Complete* is that, while it certainly contains various elements of New Order's sound over the years, it's not like that. It isn't the classic music press cliché of the return to form. Not because it's rubbish – it's great – but because it manages to sound like New Order now, rather than a pastiche of New Order by New Order.

The reason for this is partly to do with the absence of Peter Hook – Tom Chapman isn't there to replicate Hook's playing, and so the band's sound acknowledges its past without being imprisoned in it – and partly because New Order play to their greatest strength, adaptability. Just as they were saved in the 1980s from becoming a Joy Division tribute act by their discovery of dance and electronic music, so now New Order put themselves in the hands of producers like Stuart Price and the Chemical Brothers' Tom Rowlands. They've also turned to fans like La Roux and Brandon Flowers (whose band The Killers took its name from a New Order video) to provide vocals, as well as one of their own forebears, Iggy Pop, adding a variety to the album's texture.

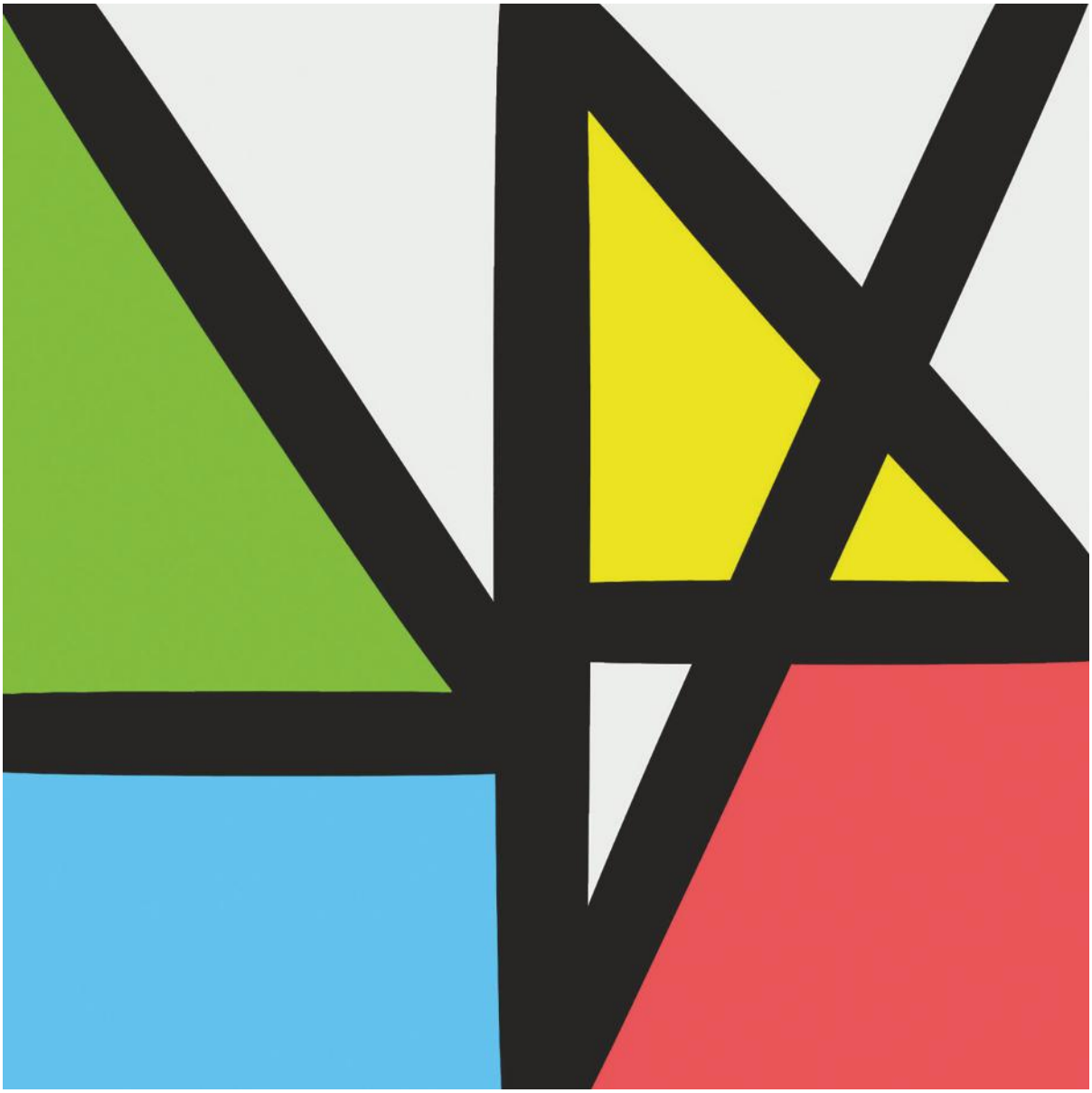
It could be a trash compactor of an album, with everything thrown into it, but it works because *Music Complete* is a big record. It sounds big, it sprawls – especially on the superior extended version *Complete Music* – and it works. This is stadium dance, designed for festivals and space rockets. From the beefy "Restless" (which could have fitted on *Technique* if they'd knocked through a couple of walls) to the gigantic "Superheated" which is so anthemic it deserves its own flag, *Music Complete* is always epic and never knowingly undercooked.

It seems to be out of time as well, bearing little relation to either the music of 2015 or the bulk of New Order's career, a bubble in the band's chronology, which is why it works so well. The listener isn't sat there all the time, checking off references to the band's glory years: *Music Complete* defies the cynics as if to suggest that, amazingly, after all this time, these are the glory years.

CRITICS' VERDICTS

"With guests including Iggy Pop, Killers fronman Brandon Flowers and La Roux, *Music Complete* is the Manchester band's best since 1993's *Republic*." NME, SEPTEMBER 25, 2015

"*Music Complete* is being trailed as a return to New Order's heavily electronic, club-friendly '80s sound. Pleasingly this proves to be largely true." STEPHEN DALTON, UNCUT, OCOTBER 2015



Despite the throughline of electronic rhythms, there is light and shade: most notably in the form of Iggy Pop's "Stray Dog". Over a moody electronic backing track, Pop declaims a lyric to a girl called Ayshea concerning love, drinking, and the Grimpen Mire from *The Hound Of The Baskervilles*. Then there's "Tutti Frutti", a dancefloor epic which owes something to Italodisco and features a chorus greatly enhanced by Elly Jackson's vocals.

DANCE certainly predominates on this album: a track like "Academic" could almost be the Pet Shop Boys were it not for Bernard Sumner's dourly romantic lyric, while "People On The High Line" is almost disco with its jaunty Chicago house piano riff. In fact, dance runs through this album so strongly it can be easy to forget that New Order are the band of "Age Of Consent" and "Ceremony" as much as "Blue Monday" and "Confusion". But this is an infectious album, and one that sounds like it might have even been fun to make. It's also the only New Order album to have come out in an extended version. The extended mixes aren't especially radical, just longer, making *Complete Music* arguably the better version as it allows the tracks to stretch out and the fingers to tap for longer periods.

A decade and a half into their second millennium, and over 30 years into their existence, New Order made, if not one of the best albums of their careers, then an incredibly good one, far from the neat stodge they could have reversed into at this point. More than just a set of songs to make playing the hits onstage bearable, *Music Complete* is far more exciting and engaging that most of us could have predicted it would be. It's great.

Remix albums are often like the weird sibling of a celebrity: they look a bit like them, they have their own appeal, but generally you don't need one when you have the other. But *Complete Music* is more than Clint Howard to *Music Complete*'s Ron: while not radically different in any way, it's arguably better, bringing out the epic qualities of *Music Complete* like a stretch limo with a swimming pool on the back full of dolphins wearing space helmets. Tracks like "Restless" are given room to not so much breathe as exhale entire glitter balls, while already epic songs like "Superheated" sound like actual stadiums. Both are recommended, but *Complete Music* is better by a nose.

THIS RECORD IS STADIUM DANCE, DESIGNED FOR FESTIVALS AND SPACE ROCKETS

TRACK MARKS

1. Restless ★★★★
2. Singularity ★★★★
3. Plastic ★★★★
4. Tutti Frutti (featuring Elly Jackson) ★★★★
5. People on the High Line (featuring Elly Jackson) ★★★★
6. Stray Dog (featuring Iggy Pop) ★★★★
7. Academic ★★★★
8. Nothing But A Fool ★★★
9. Unlearn This Hatred ★★★
10. The Game ★★★
11. Superheated (featuring Brandon Flowers) ★★★★

Label: Mute
Produced by: New Order, Tom Rowlands, and Stuart Price
Personnel: Bernard Sumner (vocals, guitar, keys, synths), Stephen Morris (drums and perc, keys, synths, drum programming), Gillian Gilbert (keys, synths), Phil Cunningham (guitars, keys, synths, electronic perc), Tom Chapman (bass, bk vocals, synths), Iggy Pop (vocals on "Stray Dog"), Brandon Flowers (vocals on "Superheated"), La Roux (vocals on "Tutti Frutti" and "People On The High Line", bk vocals on "Plastic"), Dawn Zee and Denise Johnson (bk vocals on "Plastic" and "Nothing But A Fool"), Giacomo Cavagna (Italian spoken vocal on "Tutti Frutti")
Highest chart position: UK 2; US 34

"WE'VE GOT THE PAST *AND* THE FUTURE"

The return of New Order with a new album - *Music Complete* - proves not without issue. "Baggage". Cancer. Sexism. Then there's the battles with former bassist Peter Hook. "He's not got a monopoly on history," protests Stephen Morris. "It's our past as much as his." | *by* **STEPHEN DALTON**

NICK WILSON

UNCUT | 02/16

PARIS' LES Baines Douches has a rich musical heritage. In the late 1970s and early 1980s, this former bath house held a subterranean basement club hosting shows by the likes of Talking Heads, Depeche Mode and Suicide; meanwhile, in December 1979, Joy Division played here, spawning a celebrated live album. Later, it became a kind of Parisian cousin to Studio 54. Nowadays, it is an elegant boutique hotel where New Order stay when they pass through Paris. Which has certain symmetry, at least. If you want a metaphor for the creeping gentrification of the French capital – and of rock itself – look no further.

Sitting in one of the hotel's luxurious suites one morning in November 2015, the 59-year-old Bernard Sumner radiates an air of schoolboy mischief. But nowadays his deadpan humour and soft-spoken, slightly camp manner suggest he may be maturing into Salford's answer to Alan Bennett. They even have the same haircut. Sumner begins by saying he is disappointed with the previous night's show at the Casino de Paris, citing a few technical glitches. But surely it wouldn't be a New Order gig if everything went smoothly? "Ha! It wouldn't be an old New Order gig," he says. "No, we like to get it right." New Order's unprecedented new mood of professionalism, Sumner says, is mainly due to him keeping his indulgences in check. "I just can't take the hangovers any more," he nods. "I can't get fucked up any more, so I might as well be more professional about this music malarkey. I still drink, I just don't get drunk. But we've earned our hedonist medals, we've done our tour of duty, and now it's time to do something else."

> "WE'VE EARNED OUR HEDONIST MEDALS, WE'VE DONE OUR TOUR OF DUTY, AND NOW IT'S TIME TO DO SOMETHING ELSE"
> BERNARD SUMNER

Something else, in this instance, means a majestic third-act comeback. The band's latest album, *Music Complete*, was a luxuriant blast of vintage New Order in their kaleidoscopic, euphoric, electro-pop mode. It made an impressive entrance at No 2 in the album chart before ending up in *Uncut*'s Albums Of The Year, among many accolades. It also marked the band's debut on Daniel Miller's Mute – a return to their independent roots a mere two decades after the collapse of Factory Records.

"Mute was a bit more of a Factory Records scenario," Sumner nods. "And despite all our trials and tribulations we did love our time on Factory, we loved some of that anarchy. And it has a father figure, a bit like Tony Wilson was, which is Daniel Miller. So it's very appealing."

Does Sumner ever miss the chaos of Factory? "Strangely enough, no," he laughs. "I think when you're young you can cope with all that, because you think it's a bit of a laugh. But when you're older, you realise it's bloody hard work. Making the album was super-intense. So when you're doing that much work, you don't want someone to fuck their end up. I'm not saying they always did at Factory, but they made some dodgy decisions."

Daniel Miller is also in Paris, leading a delegation of Mute top brass to witness the live launch of *Music Complete*. A long-time studio mentor to Depeche Mode and musician himself, Miller played a hands-on role in recording and mixing the album. The band's return to their classic synth-heavy sound was, he says, one factor in New Order signing with Mute.

"It suits them to be more electronic, so of course that was part of the whole picture for me," Miller explains. "If this had been another guitar-rock album, for me that's not what the essence of New Order is. It's the mixture between the two. But it was more about the songs. If you've got great songs then it doesn't matter what the format is."

DURING the Past 10 years, the legend of Joy Division and New Order has been bolstered by a slew of books and films. Even the night before, the band chose to end their set at the Casino de Paris with "Atmosphere", complete with a photo-montage of Ian Curtis and the words 'Joy Division Forever' blazed across onstage screens. It was an unusual concession to nostalgia for such unsentimental, forward-thinking pop modernists. Indeed, while some of the tracks on *Music Complete* may hark back to vintage New Order, others are unprecedented in their canon, from Iggy Pop's brooding spoken-word monologue "Stray Dog" to the squelchy, shuddering blast of "Singularity". Sumner insists he always looks forward, not backwards. But he admits the accumulated gravitas around his two bands sometimes weighs heavily. Daniel Miller agrees New Order came to Mute with some hefty baggage. "But baggage can be interpreted in two ways," he argues. "It's a negative term but it can also mean great history, or legacy. I think a lot of it is to do with the record they made, which surprised everybody with how good it was. It becomes legacy and history when you make a great record; it becomes baggage when you don't."

Music Complete is the first New Order album not to feature Hook's basslines, which many consider an irreplaceable strand of the band's DNA. It transpires that the current lineup initially considered returning with a few low-key EPs instead of a full album, so nervous were they of fan reaction. With all five members now contributing to the songwriting process, Sumner describes the reconstituted New Order as a democracy. But it is clear from spending time with them that, with Hook now gone, the singer is first among equals.

"It's a rock'n'roll democracy," laughs drummer Stephen Morris, who is writing a book about the power structures that define and destroy rock groups. "Democracy never works in bands. Bernard's not a dictator in the conventional sense, ha! Bands always start out as a democracy, and then the rules come into effect, roles are assumed and you become streamlined into the rock machine. And the one at the front is always the one who grabs all the power."

> "DEMOCRACY NEVER WORKS IN BANDS. AND THE ONE AT THE FRONT IS ALWAYS THE ONE WHO GRABS ALL THE POWER"
> STEPHEN MORRIS

In the basement of Les Baines Douches, almost within touching distance of the low stage where Joy Division once played, Gillian Gilbert considers her own remarkable return to New Order. Sitting with her husband, Stephen Morris, Gilbert recalls the events of 2007: the year Factory boss Tony Wilson died, Hook left the band and she was diagnosed with breast cancer.

Gilbert was obliged to leave New Order in 2001 to care for her youngest daughter with Morris, Grace, who suffers from the debilitating condition, transverse myelitis. But it was her own illness that made her so resolved to rejoin the band. "I came out of Christie's hospital having had my chemo," she recalls. "It's really weird, because I went through the car park and the wind was blowing, and I was like: 'God, this is what it feels like to be alive!' And then that made me really sad because Ian took his own life. When you haven't got a choice you think: 'Life isn't worth living.' I felt really sad for him. He didn't have a choice..."

"He bloody did!" Morris objects. "He was a stubborn fucker, let's be honest."

For Morris and Gilbert, there is a clear link between personal tragedy and New Order's comeback. After all, the band's 2011 live rebirth grew out of two benefit shows for their American filmmaker friend Michael Shamberg, who needed medical treatment for a progressive neurological disease. Shamberg, who produced New Order videos including "Blue Monday" and "True Faith", died in 2014. "If it hadn't been for Michael getting ill we wouldn't be here now," says Morris. Curiously, Gilbert's experience of enforced leave from New Order has given her some sympathy for Peter Hook's position. Having seen her contribution to the band written out of official press releases, and then having to lobby to rejoin instead of being invited back, she can understand Hook's sense of loss.

"That's what I felt when I left briefly, I felt so bad," she says. "You want the world to stop. It's awful that the others carry on. It's like Joy Division – Debbie [Curtis's widow] felt really bad. It was like: 'My husband's died and you're carrying on.'"

"And you fuckers are fucking dancing on his grave!" Morris laughs. "You only got the bloody job because Ian died! Sorry, I'm being very cruel there, but you sometimes think that, don't you?"

This is trademark New Order humour: levity masking decades of guilt and grief. Morris may be joking, but Gilbert is serious, the most intense I have ever seen her. "The worst thing that can happen is you bloody die," Gilbert says with force. "That's the worst thing. Because I've been through cancer treatment, and I don't want to die."

THE official mood music around New Order's Paris show is all about positivity and looking forward. But the absence of Hook nevertheless feels almost tangible. Following his decision to leave New Order, Hook declared the band over. Sumner, Morris and guitarist Phil Cunningham disagreed, but initially regrouped as Bad Lieutenant, bringing new bass player Tom Chapman on board. Then in 2011, the three remaining original members reactivated New Order by licensing the name from their shared company with Hook – Vitalturn – to a new company, New Order Ltd. Hook was not party to this decision and has launched a lawsuit for "misappropriation" of assets. The case is now due to go to full trial.

According to court reports, Hook receives 1.25 per cent of New Order's current royalties and other income from merchandising and performances. He is suing for up to 12.5 per cent, including backdated royalties of £2.3 million. The current lineup dispute these claims, pointing out that Hook still receives his full share of pre-2011 profits.

"He does get paid for the name New Order," Sumner says with exasperation. "A: he left the band, and B: he still gets paid for everything we

New Order sign to Mute records alongside label boss Daniel Miller (second left), Groucho Club, London, September 2, 2014.

JIM DYSON/GETTY IMAGES

The way we were: Ian Curtis fronts Joy Division at Les Bains Douches, Paris, December 18, 1979

do using the name New Order; he gets a percentage. Not just his old royalties, but let's say this new album, he'll get a cut of that, as well... We do pay him, he just wants more."

Behind this current dispute, of course, lie decades of emotional and psychological friction. Sumner and Hook have had a volatile relationship since first meeting in their early teens at Salford Grammar School. The singer claims "the atomic structure of the problem" is that Hook was jealous of him. But it is notable how, in their interviews and memoirs, both are still carefully respectful of each other as musicians. "It's sad if you are really close friends, yeah, but we weren't, really," Sumner shrugs. "I think we got to the stage where we were drifting apart and then the band happened, so that glued us together. But it just got worse and worse over the years. We are just very different people."

The rest of New Order express mixed feelings towards Hook, but everybody agrees the general mood is happier without him. "When I first joined the band, things were cool, it was quite good fun," says Cunningham, a fixture in the New Order family since 2001. "Then eventually he just got more and more unhappy within the band, and that was it. Now it seems like he's left the house, but he's outside chucking bricks through the windows."

Hook has never met his musical replacement, Tom Chapman, but he has publicly accused him of miming to his basslines. "He's said some awful things about Bernard in the press," notes Chapman. "And Gillian. We've all had it. But it feels like we've moved on from that. I think people were almost expecting us to fail with this album, but New Order are stronger than that. It's a new chapter."

It is interesting that Hook accuses the current lineup of "masquerading as New Order", and yet nobody made similar claims during Gilbert's sabbatical. "A working knowledge of the rules of rock'n'roll, the hierarchy involved, means the bass player trumps the keyboard player," explains Morris. "But in reality, it's no different at all. It was sexist, yeah."

Morris believes a future New Order reunion with Hook is not impossible, but Sumner is adamant it will never happen. But then, Ian Brown and John Squire spent years denying the Stone Roses would ever reform. A decade from now, could New Order play Etihad Stadium with Hook back in the ranks? "No," says Sumner. "Categorically. He's said so many bad things. It's passed the point of no return."

Sumner cites Pink Floyd's brief reunion at Live8 as proof of why New Order can never look back. "On paper it was a wonderful thing," he says. "But when you watch the footage it makes you cringe, because the body language is so bad. So no, I wouldn't want to put any of us through that. I hope he's happy in what he's doing; we are happy in what we're doing. He claims he's happy, so the situation is mutually perfect."

PIERRE RENE-WORMS, ANGELA WEISS/GETTY IMAGES

"TECHNO TUDOR"

Peter Saville on his sleeve designs for *Music Complete*

PETER SAVILLE is "part of the family", says Bernard Sumner, one of the founders of Factory Records alongside Tony Wilson, Alan Erasmus and Martin Hannett. Though he had effectively retired from designing sleeves, Saville was tempted back for *Music Complete*. The result is a striking cover in a style dubbed "Techno Tudor", with crisscrossing black lines framing Mondrian-style colour patchworks.

"I knew they were revisiting electronics," Saville explains. "Responding to this I began by looking at circuitry and technical system grids. Ironically among these references I found I had half-timbered patterns of Tudor architecture, classic examples of which are in Cheshire – the ambivalence of which completed the circuit."

"Have you noticed that the black lines bow slightly?" Sumner asks. "His concept is Techno Tudor, and the black lines actually bow slightly, they are supposed to represent Tudor buildings. The concept is this album is quite electronic sounding, but you can hear the handicraft behind it. In Tudor times nothing was built using machines, so this is a combination of building by hand and machines."

According to Tom Chapman, when Saville concluded the presentation of his design ideas to the band in a London restaurant, everybody stood up and applauded. "Apparently it's the first sleeve that he's delivered on time," Chapman says.

It takes Tudor: Peter Saville and the sleeve for *Music Complete*

18+

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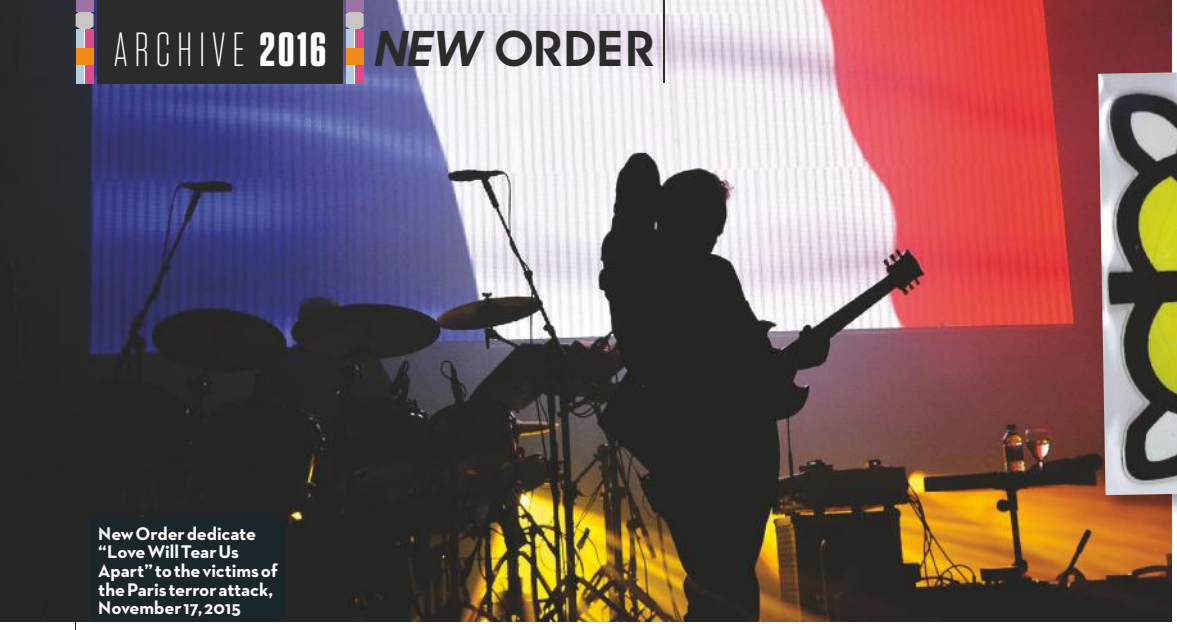

New Order dedicate "Love Will Tear Us Apart" to the victims of the Paris terror attack, November 17, 2015

Such is the bizarre divided state of New Order for 2016. While Peter Hook and The Light tour with live versions of the band's classic albums, his former comrades play arenas with new material. It feels like he got the past, and they got the future.

"It's everybody's past, he's not got a fucking monopoly on history," Morris protests.

"He's got the past," Sumner nods, "we've got the past and the future."

ON November 13 – nine days after New Order play the Casino de Paris – a series of co-ordinated terrorist attacks took place in the city, leaving 130 people dead, including 89 at an Eagles Of Death Metal show in the Bataclan concert hall.

"Our immediate reaction was one of shock and disbelief," says Bernard Sumner. "Having opened the tour in Paris so recently and having played there many times, it's a city very close to our hearts."

"I'm half French, so I felt really close to the events in Paris," says Tom Chapman. "We also found out later on that one of the girls who did catering for us at the Casino de Paris was shot at the Bataclan. She survived, but got shot in the leg. So we felt very affected by the events. Basically I just felt it was an attack on freedom, on people going out and enjoying the normal things we like doing."

When they play Brixton Academy just three nights after the Paris attacks, New Orderplay beneath a French tricolor flag. "Vive la France!" Sumner proclaims, dedicating "Love Will Tear Us Apart" to the Parisian victims. Chapman plays in a French football top.

"It was a mark of our respect to the people of France and to honour everyone affected by the shocking events in Paris," Sumner explains. "Hopefully it was a fitting tribute and in our own little way sent a message that we are all thinking of them."

> "WHEN WE STARTED IT WAS A BURDEN AND A BLESSING. PEOPLE WERE INTERESTED BECAUSE WE *WERE* JOY DIVISION BUT IT WAS A BURDEN THAT WE COULDN'T *BE* JOY DIVISION"
> BERNARD SUMNER

As 2016 opens, New Order are preparing for a world tour, including festival slots, as well as what could turn out to be a headline-grabbing trial. It is very much emblematic of New Order: good times come hand in hand with the bad. "When we first started New Order it was both a burden and a blessing," considers Sumner. "People were interested in us because obviously we *were* Joy Division, but it was a burden in that we couldn't *be* Joy Division. We had to reinvent ourselves, but we weren't very good at that; we're not rock chameleons like David Bowie or Madonna. We didn't have a clue really. We don't design or contrive or engineer things, we just fuddle on and hope it works out."

"I DON'T THINK THAT'S ON!"

Peter Hook's war of words with his former bandmates

"I've watched so-called New Order and Tom Chapman is miming to my bass on tape... It's the Milli Vanilli of bass."
NME, 2012

"When we got to New Order we were still a great table, we just had a bit of a wonky leg. We kept shoving a beer mat under it, which was Gillian, but as we all know when you shove a beer mat under a table it eventually wobbles loose again doesn't it?"
SPOOK MAGAZINE, 2013

"Tom Chapman really is a session musician. But they're sending him out doing interviews, which I don't think is being fair to the fans. And it was particularly annoying for me when I found out he was signing New Order records. I don't think that's on."
DROWNED IN SOUND, 2014

"I would love nothing more at this point in my life to turn around to Bernard, who I admire greatly, and say: good luck man, have a great time. But because of the way they did it, I can't and will not. It's like a divorce, spending all the time fighting over the kids."
VANYALAND, 2014

"They might be using the name but they are not New Order. That whole thing about calling a press conference to say that a bunch of old farts had signed to an old-fart record company was the height of pomposity, it really was. They've definitely got an overblown sense of their own importance."
MUSICAL INSTRUMENT PROFESSIONAL, 2014

"The angst of New Order before we split up in 2006 was unbelievable, and in my opinion, Barney was being a bastard. And not only was he being a bastard to me, I thought that he was treating the audience badly."
100 PER CENT ROCK, 2015

"I would never trust Bernard to hypnotise me because he'd have me running around naked, being a chicken... he's a complete fucking twat."
THE GUARDIAN, 2015

Bass sentiments: Peter Hook

ARAYA DIAZ/GETTY IMAGES

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JOY DIVISION & NEW ORDER

LIVES & COMPILATIONS

Joy Division subdivided, New Order reordered. Titles: baffling. | *By* **PETER WATTS**

JOY DIVISION were only around for a couple of years, but spawned such intense mythology that they have been compiled as many times as New Order, who have decades more material to call upon. **SUBSTANCE** FACTORY, 1988 ★★★ was first out the door, a companion to the essential New Order singles compilation and almost as successful. It was the first time fans could get non-album singles "Transmission", "Komakino" (CD only), "Love Will Tear Us Apart" and "Atmosphere". Its fault lay in the chronological tracklisting, which meant it opened with weak and unrepresentative tracks "Warsaw" and "Leaders Of Men" from "An Ideal For Living". Other rarities were "Digital" from *A Factory Sample*, "Autosuggestion" from *Earcom 2: Contradiction* and "Komakino"'s brilliant B-side "Incubation". A remastered version was released in 2015 with additional material.

Around the same time, a pair of Peel Sessions were released on two EPs, which were then compiled as **PEEL SESSIONS** STRANGE FRUIT, 1990 ★★★★. These tightrope-raw and poised versions of Joy Division classics as well as relative rarities "Exercise One" and "Sound Of Music" were then released again on **THE COMPLETE BBC RECORDINGS** STRANGE FRUIT, 2000 ★★★, which included two tracks taken from TV's *Something Else* and an interview with Curtis and Morris. This entire album resurfaced as the second disc of **THE BEST OF JOY DIVISION** LONDON, 2008 ★★★★, the first disc being a solid if slightly conservative selection of the band's best moments. Rhino also released the band's singles in a seven-inch boxset with an irritating title, **+- SINGLES 1978–80** RHINO, 2010 ★★★.

Aside from these, a flurry of releases appeared in the mid-'90s after the collapse of Factory. **WARSAW** MOVIEPLAY GOLD, 1994 ★★★ has the feel of a bootleg and featured early Warsaw tracks and demos, including the dozen tracks recorded for RCA at Arrow Studios that were intended to be the first album (when the band were already renamed Joy Division). At times, these can sound as different from Joy Division as Joy Division are from New Order, only not in a good way. **PERMANENT** LONDON, 1995 ★★★ was London's first attempt to make sense of their inheritance in the form of a best-of, and they decided to begin and end the album with different versions of "Love Will Tear Us Apart". "Something Must Break" and "Novelty" were also unexpected inclusions. A couple of years later, a much better job was done with **HEART AND SOUL** LONDON, 1997 ★★★★★, a very good boxset that featured pretty much everything they ever released – studio albums, demos (including Curtis's versions of "Ceremony" and "In A Lonely Place"), Peel sessions, rarities – plus several songs that had never leaked before, including some Piccadilly Radio sessions and a live disc containing songs from four different shows. Beautiful packaging too.

With the job done so effectively, there wasn't much left to play with. **MARTIN HANNETT'S PERSONAL MIXES** INTERSTATE, 2007 ★ had alternative mixes, jams and studio chat but did nothing to enhance Joy Division's reputation or shed any light on Hannett's approach. **LET THE MOVIE BEGIN** INTERSTATE, 2007 ★★ was a similar cash-in, featuring ramshackle demos and live tracks interspersed with clips from interviews. For casual listeners, 2008's *Best Of Joy Division* covers all bases, while *Heart And Soul* takes care of the rest.

Another plus in the *Heart And Soul* column is the fact it contains some excellent Joy Division live tracks. Of the full concerts, **PRESTON 28 FEBRUARY 1980** NMC, 1999 ★★ is thin gruel, with shoddy sound and a less-than-brilliant performance, but **LES**

CRITICS' VERDICTS

PEEL SESSIONS 1981
"These woebegone wee things set out to contemplate the sweet smell of sleeping children, eternity and stolid angst but return to the fold with a severe case of brewer's droop. Just like that poor man from Status Quo. [...] Joy Division have so much to answer for. Pre-playful New Order were a horrible, horrible spectacle, weren't they now?" JOHN WILDE, NME, 05/12/87

Joy Division
The Complete BBC Recordings

(the best of) NewOrder

WARSAW
PLUS BONUS TRACKS

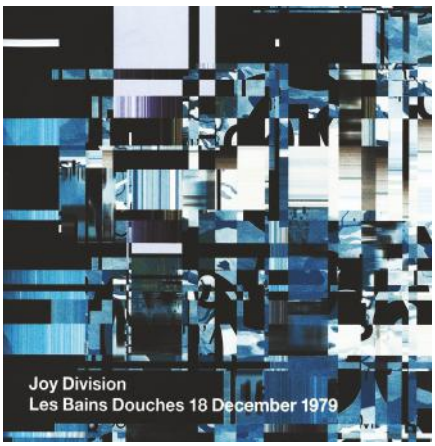
Joy Division
Freshwell Box

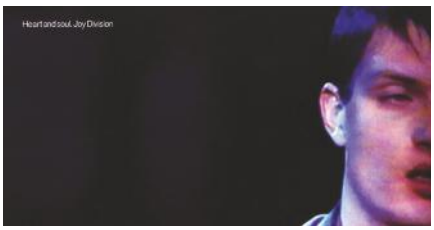
THE BEST OF
JOY DIVISION

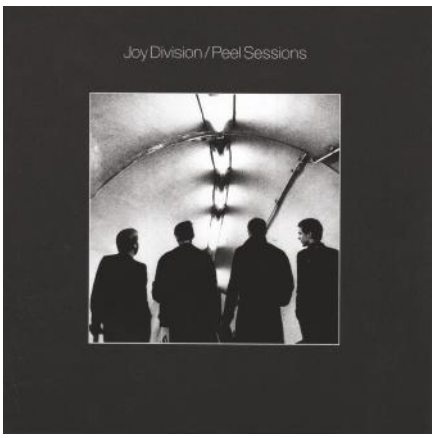
New Order
In Session

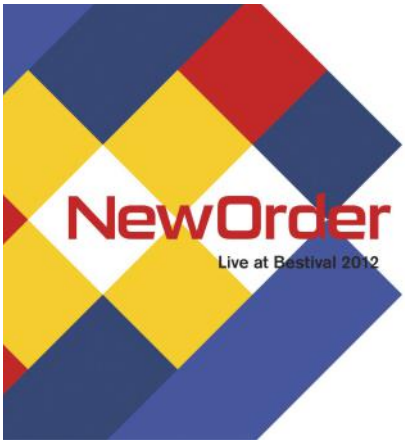
'JOY DIVISION'
MARTIN HANNETT'S PERSONAL MIXES

NEW ORDER
SINGLES

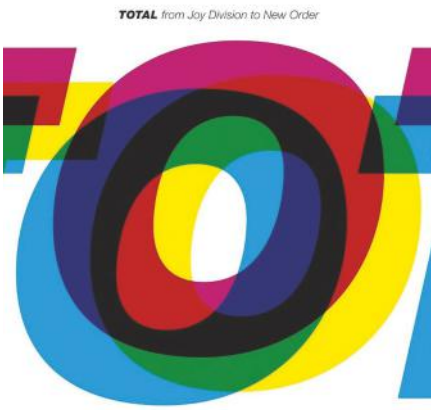

Joy Division
Les Bains Douches 18 December 1979


Heart and soul: Joy Division


Joy Division / Peel Sessions


NewOrder
Live at Bestival 2012

REFRACTURED BOXONE


TOTAL from Joy Division to New Order

Joy Division
'Let The Movie Begin'

New Order Presents BE MUSIC

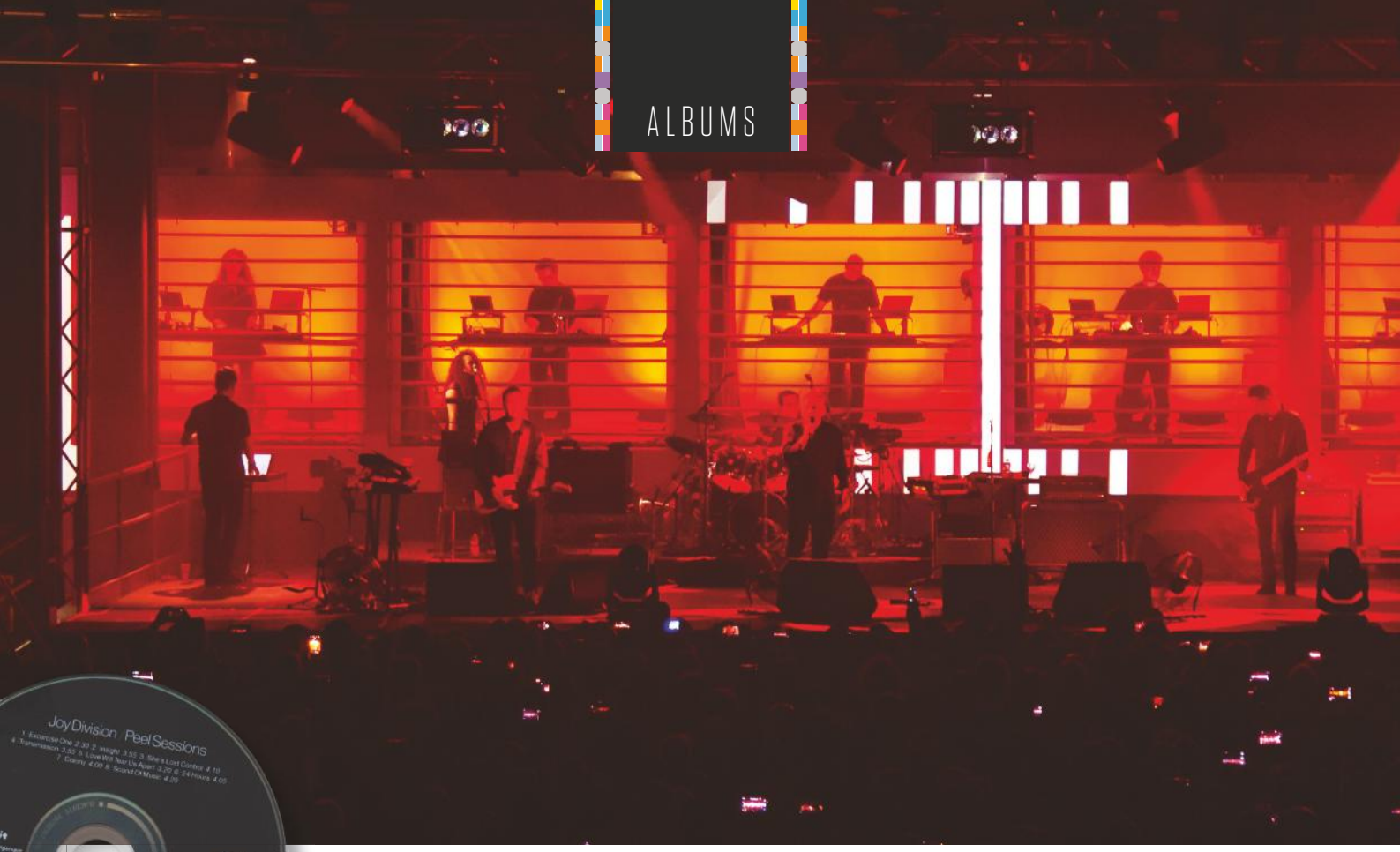
NEW order
BEST REMIXES
No

new order

NEW ORDER BEFORE & AFTER
& JOY DIVISION THE BBC SESSIONS
BBC

JOY DIVISION
SUBSTANCE

NewOrder



BAINS DOUCHES 18 DECEMBER 1979 NMC, 2001 ★★★★ – which also had material recorded in Amsterdam and Eindhoven – is more worthwhile, containing some barnstorming versions of tracks with a more foreground sense of seething aggression than you find in the studio albums. **FRACTURED BOX** NMC 2001 ★★★ put the two together. The execrable **RE-FRACTURED BOX** NMC, 2004 ★ did it again, only with a T-shirt.

ON to New Order, and just as Joy Division's *Substance* was a matching pair with the original and unmissable New Order version, you can also get his-and-his Peel Session albums for both bands. **NEW ORDER'S JOHN PEEL SESSIONS** STRANGE FRUIT, 1990 ★★★★ rounded-up two EPs of sessions in 1981 and 1982, and caught the band moving away from the Hannett/JD sound but not yet settling on their new feel. An update appeared as **IN SESSION** STRANGE FRUIT, 2004 ★★★★, featuring a Peel session from 1998 as well as an Evening Session from 2002. The BBC vault wasn't yet empty: **BEFORE & AFTER – THE BBC SESSIONS** FUEL, 2002 ★★★ was a two-disc set that had Joy Division's *Complete BBC Recordings* LP paired with a New Order Radio 1 show. If anybody is looking for a gap in the market, a single CD containing all New Order and Joy Division live-in-the-studio Peel/Evening sessions would not go amiss.

When London inherited New Order they almost immediately hit it big with **(THE BEST OF) NEW ORDER** LONDON, 1994 ★★★★★. The 1994 best-of had a tough job in trying to compete with the gargantuan and still popular *Substance* and it successfully did so by concentrating on seven-inch mixes of singles and including new mixes of "True Faith", "Bizarre Love Triangle" and "1963", while also adding tracks from *Technique* and *Republic* as well as "Touched By The Hand Of God" and "World In Motion". It was such a hit that London couldn't resist a follow-up in the form of a fairly pointless remix album, titled **(THE REST OF) NEW ORDER** LONDON, 1995 ★★★.

London Records had done a stand-up job with the Joy Division boxset *Heart And Soul*, but for New Order they produced the decent but over-thought

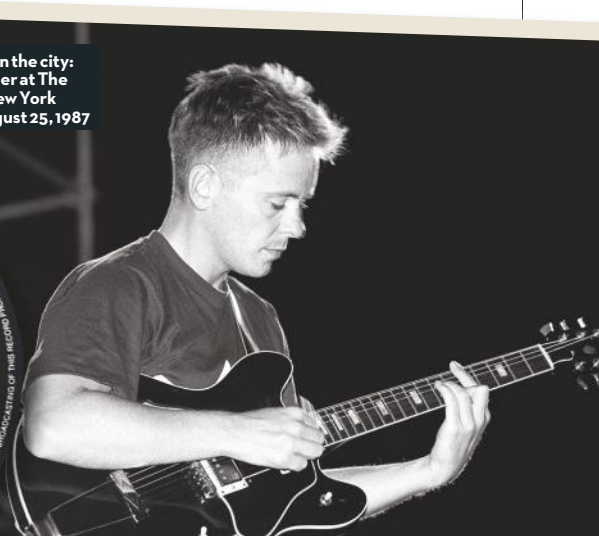
CRITICS' VERDICTS

BBC 1 LIVE IN CONCERT
"New Order will always have that elusive Something Special... It's a treasurable magic essence that spills all over their performance on *Live In Concert*, from Gillian's magnificently tacky techno doodles to Hooky's bearded monster bass riffs to Stephen's extraordinarily crisp and crunchy machine drum attacks to Bernard's irresistibly vulnerable musings on, oh, everything that ever mattered."
PAUL LESTER, MM, 01/02/92

LIVE AT THE LONDON TROXY FEATURED THE HOOK-LESS VERSION OF THE BAND IN A CLUB ENVIRONMENT

RETRO LONDON, 2002 ★★★★. This had four themed albums selected by semi-celebs – *Pop*, by Miranda Sawyer, had the hits; *Fan*, by John McCready, had deep cuts; *Club*, by Mike Pickering, had dance anthems and remixes; *Live*, by Bobby Gillespie, had live tracks. Fans weren't happy about the lack of new and unreleased material, so a limited-edition version containing an extra CD, *Bonus*, was issued with some genuine rarities, including a 17-minute "Elegia". Earlier that same year, London also issued a single-disc best-of, **INTERNATIONAL** LONDON 2002 ★★, although this was only available in the UK via import.

Retro wasn't perfect but it was still good enough to render any following compilations redundant. **BEST REMIXES** WARNER BROS, 2005 ★★ was a download-only compilation of remixes that had little to recommend it, while the double CD **SINGLES** WARNER BROS, 2005 ★★★, rather like the 1994 best-of, focused



Sumner in the city: New Order at The Pier in New York City, August 25, 1987

EBET ROBERTS/GETTY IMAGES

Digital: New Order with featured artist Liam Gillick and synth orchestra at Officine Grandi Riparazioni, Turin, May 5, 2018

Still clubbable: Sumner with New Order at the Troxy in east London, December 10, 2011

largely on the original seven-inch versions of the singles, including ones like "Ceremony", "Everything's Gone Green" and "Temptation", which had not previously been issued on CD. There was also a new mix of "Confusion" made for the album. It was updated in 2016 with some different remixes and "I'll Stay With You" from *Lost Sirens*, but *Substance* and *(the best of) New Order* still remain the essential New Order compilations.

Somewhat surprisingly, nobody saw fit to release a compilation that brought together material by both Joy Division and New Order until the release of **TOTAL: FROM JOY DIVISION TO NEW ORDER** RHINO, 2011 ★★★. In truth the two bands are so radically different they make a fairly uncomfortable fit, "Ceremony" notwithstanding (albeit the New Order version), but there was still enough of a market for people who wanted "Blue Monday" and "Love Will Tear Us Apart" in one place for the album to go silver. The album also featured an unreleased track, "Hellbent", as well as the good late single "Crystal", which doesn't feature on other compilations.

Finally, there's the excellent curio **NEW ORDER PRESENTS BE MUSIC** FACTORY BENELUX, 2017 ★★★★, a boxset compiling the tracks Sumner, Hook, Morris and Gilbert produced for other artists for Factory. This came as a double vinyl LP of 12 tracks (including early dance classics by Quando Quango and Marcel King, plus tracks by A Certain Ratio, The Other Two, Tim Burgess and Fujiya & Miyagi), or a 32-track 3CD box. The recordings from the early '80s are particularly enlightening, as they provide a context for the New Order LPs of that period and also show some of the ways they were experimenting with sound and rhythm. A brilliant collection of waifs, strays and ephemera.

NEW ORDER are famously sketchy as a live act, which possibly explains the huge gaps in their live album catalogue. Their debut live LP was something of a safe choice in the form of **BBC RADIO 1 LIVE IN CONCERT** WINDSONG INTERNATIONAL, 1992 ★★★, which featured their headlining slot at Glastonbury in 1987 (something that wasn't even mentioned on the sleeve at the time). It featured a truncated version of the band's setlist, which included one of the first live performances of "True Faith". The band closes with a nine-minute version of "Sister Ray", which is fun if a bit weedy. It would have been nice to have a couple of other originals such as the omitted "Sub-culture" or "Ceremony". The version of "Elegia" performed here (and also cut from the final album) finally surfaced on the *Retro* boxset. The album has been reissued several times, but never in a complete form. It's also available as the "after" element of the *Before & After* album, "before" being Joy Division's Peel sessions.

And, remarkably, that's it from the band's golden era. There's clearly more in the vault, as there is a whole disc's worth of live songs on *Retro*, but none of the parent concerts have been released in their entirety. Instead, we have four albums dating from after their 2011 reunion, starting with **LIVE AT THE LONDON TROXY** ABBEY ROAD LIVE, 2011 ★★★, which featured the Hook-less version of the band in a club environment and still finding their way back together as a live act. That provides a rough edge to an otherwise fine performance of songs taken from across the band's career and which ends with Sumner tackling "Blue Monday" followed by "Love Will Tear Us Apart". At the time, this was an unexpected and genuinely thrilling way to end the set, and the energy from crowd and band is lovely to witness. The album has become something of a rarity as it is no longer particularly easy to find.

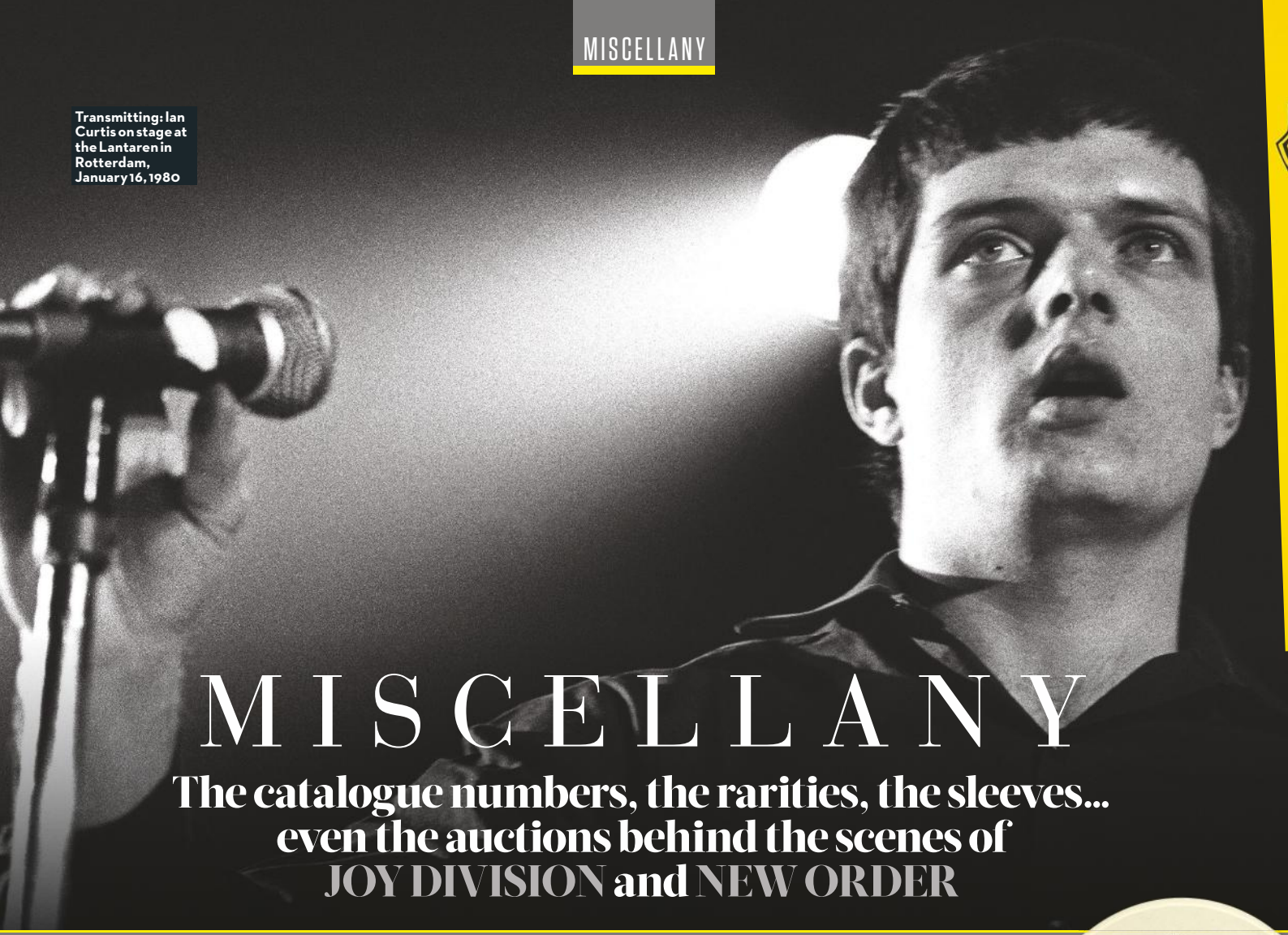
Not too long after came **LIVE AT BESTIVAL 2012** SUNDAY BEST, 2013 ★★★, which essentially repeated the tracklisting of the Troxy show, only with less of the novelty value and a little more finesse. Live, the group's rock origins seem to come to the fore, something enhanced by the appearance of tracks like "Regret" and "Isolation" early on. They also play "Transmission" and close with "Love Will Tear Us Apart", and there's a 10-minute "Temptation", which tests the limits of Sumner's voice – the album's main weakness.

And still they kept coming. **NOMC15** 2017 ★★★ was recorded in Brixton and featured some deeper cuts ("Your Silent Face", "Waiting For The Sirens' Call", "Atmosphere") plus skippable tracks from *Complete Music*. New Order are now something close to polished, but the hits are twisted sufficiently to make them interesting, and the closing "Blue Monday" ends things on a high. Finally, saving the best to last, there's the helpfully titled and beautifully packaged **∑(NO,12K,LG,17MIF) NEW ORDER + LIAM GILLICK: SO IT GOES** MUTE, 2019 ★★★★, which captured New Order's collaboration with a 12-piece synth orchestra at the Manchester International Festival – the venue where Joy Division had made their TV debut on Tony Wilson's *So It Goes*. This artful and studied presentation seemed to restore some of New Order's sense of Factory cool after the sweaty Brixton and Bestival shows, and had the band playing a bunch of rarities like "Dream Attack" and "Ultraviolence" plus Joy Division tracks "Disorder", "Decades" and "Heart & Soul" and a few hits ("Bizarre Love Triangle", "Shellshock"). It's the sound of a band coming to terms with their legacy but still finding ways to present, understand and interpret what they have achieved.

CRITICS' VERDICTS

(THE REST OF) NEW ORDER
"I had always thought that the magical quality of New Order was impossible to put your finger on. Clearly, I was wrong, as almost every remixer on *'(the rest of)'* has located it and binned it. There's some top mixing talent included among the usual overpaid hacks – Fluke and Howie B have worked some mighty improvements in their time – but to no avail. This entire collection isn't worth a few seconds of *Substance*, although it's just as aptly titled. Well might it cower behind parentheses and lower-case letters." DAVID BENNUN, MM, 23/09/95

HAYLEY MADDEN/REDFERNS



Transmitting: Ian Curtis on stage at the Lantaren in Rotterdam, January 16, 1980

MISCELLANY

The catalogue numbers, the rarities, the sleeves... even the auctions behind the scenes of JOY DIVISION and NEW ORDER

FACS OF THE MATTER

The Factory catalogue numbers that really matter to the Joy Division/New Order aficionado. *By Mark Beaumont*

FAC 1 THE FACTORY POSTER
The Factory inauguration: a poster designed by Peter Saville advertising four gigs at the Russel (sic) Club in Moss Side in the summer of 1978. June 9 sees Joy Division play alongside The Tiller Boys.

FAC 2 A FACTORY SAMPLE
The label's first release in December 1978, showcasing two Joy Division songs, "Digital" and "Glass", alongside tracks by The Durutti Column, John Dowie and Cabaret Voltaire.

FAC 10 JOY DIVISION UNKNOWN PLEASURES
June 15, 1979. Joy Division's debut album, an artefact of legend.

FAC 13 JOY DIVISION TRANSMISSION
October 7, 1979. The debut Joy Division single came backed with "Novelty".

FAC 23 JOY DIVISION LOVE WILL TEAR US APART
June 27, 1980. The JD classic, a hit in the wake of Ian Curtis's suicide. The B-side of the original release plays at 33rpm to fit in "These Days" and "Love Will Tear Us Apart (Again)".

FAC 25 JOY DIVISION CLOSER
July 18, 1980. Curtis's posthumous masterpiece, released in two editions on vinyl – matt and gloss sleeves – with initial pressings on red-tinged vinyl.

FAC 33 NEW ORDER CEREMONY
January 1981. The birth of New Order, repurposing a Joy Division song. Later white-label releases of the single featured a re-recording of the song with Gillian Gilbert.

FAC 50 NEW ORDER MOVEMENT
November 13, 1981. New Order get moving in earnest on a transitional debut they'd later come to hate.

FAC 73 NEW ORDER BLUE MONDAY
March 7, 1983. The breakthrough, initially only released on 12in owing to its 7:29 running time. The only record to have an anecdote about its packaging.

FAC 74 NEW ORDER POWER, CORRUPTION & LIES
May 2, 1983. Colour codes in the corner of the cover of New Order's second album spelt either FACT 75 or FACD 75, depending on which format you bought.

FAC 99 MOLAR RECONSTRUCTION
A dental bill covered by Factory for "Robert Gretton's mouth". Fac 98 (1983), incidentally, was a hairdressers: Swing.

FACT 100 NEW ORDER LOW-LIFE
May 13, 1985. New Order come into their own on album three, featuring a fancy monochrome-meets-vellum cover.

FACT 150 NEW ORDER BROTHERHOOD
September 29, 1986. The band's rock-meets-dance fourth came in a limited-edition metallic sleeve.

'80s New Order: from *Low-Life* to fine times...

ROB VERHORST/GETTY IMAGES; PICTORIAL PRESS/ALAMY STOCK PHOTO

The remixed re-release of "Blue Monday", New Order's biggest hit of the '80s, was accompanied by 250 promotional flick-books, as seen in the video.

FAC 230 REVENGE ONE TRUE PASSION
June 1990. The first crack appears with the release of the debut album by Hooky side project Revenge.

FAC 253 CHAIRMAN RESIGNS
Not a record, a bet. Tony Wilson bet Rob Gretton that forthcoming New Order single "Round & Round" (FAC 263) would go Top 5, otherwise he'd resign. It didn't, but Wilson kept his job.

FAC 257 ELECTRONIC GETTING AWAY WITH IT
December 4, 1989. Bernard Sumner's collaboration with Johnny Marr and Neil Tennant enters the extracurricular fray.

FAC 163 NEW ORDER BIZARRE LOVE TRIANGLE
November 5, 1986. An imperial phase of New Order singles begins.

FAC 183 NEW ORDER TRUE FAITH
July 27, 1987. New Order's first Top 5 hit, backed with "1963".

FACT 200 NEW ORDER SUBSTANCE
August 15, 1987. The greatest hits; a gatefold vinyl edition limited to 1,000 was issued to Factory employees only.

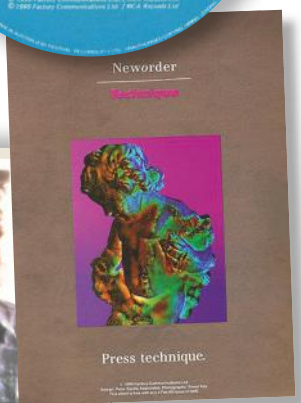
FAC 275 NEW ORDER TECHNIQUE
January 30, 1989. New Order's electro masterclass had a sleeve that was 'completed' with a sticker called 'Press Technique', given away with an issue of *NME*.

FAC 277 NME FRED FACT PAGE
November 28, 1990. Fred Dellar's list of the Factory catalogue numbers in the issue of *NME* was a pivotal moment for New Order – listing as it did many projects that contributed no music, only wasted money. Much of it theirs.

FAC 289 NEW ORDER 'CAMPAIGN TECHNIQUE'
A set of four sheets of New Order branded stationery. See also FAC 203, an NO ruler.

FAC 293 ENGLANDNEWORDER WORLD IN MOTION
May 21, 1990. Several members of the 1990 England squad had a go at rapping on the official World Cup single, but only John Barnes' attempt was usable.

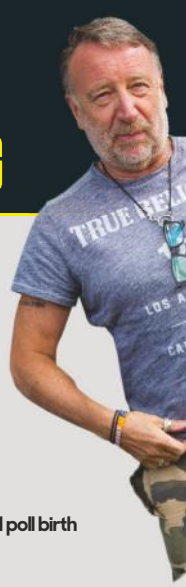
FAC 235 NEW ORDER BLUE MONDAY 88 FLICKBOOK



FACT 300 NEW ORDER {UNTITLED}
Only around five cassettes were produced of FACT 300, instrumental versions of songs that would eventually appear on *Republic* on London Records.

FACT 330 THE OTHER TWO {UNTITLED}
The last NO-related project on Factory Records was a test pressing of five to 10 copies of the album that would eventually see the light of day as *The Other Two & You*.

IDEAL FOR GIVING



ON March 2, 2019, Peter Hook sold all of his remaining Joy Division archive at music memorabilia specialists Omega Auctions in Chesire. Some of the profits from the sale went to the Christie cancer hospital in Manchester. "These objects are very, very important," Hooky wrote in his introduction to the catalogue (£12; £17 signed). "But now it's time for me to let them go..." Particularly interesting/weird lots included:

LOT 22
Hooky's birth certificate, showing his pre-deed poll birth name: Peter Woodhead.

LOT 32
"Ideal For Living" EP, signed by the band. A copy of the band's notoriously tinny-sounding debut 7in EP, complete with modest signatures. Expected to make £3,000, it went for £11,500.

LOT 78
A 24-bar set of brass chimes. From Cargo studios and notable for their use on Joy Division's "Atmosphere". Went missing, along with Nico's harmonium, from Hooky's studio for a while, but were returned for a Joy Division exhibition years later. Hooky notes: "I have no idea what happened to the harmonium." Sold for: £5,800

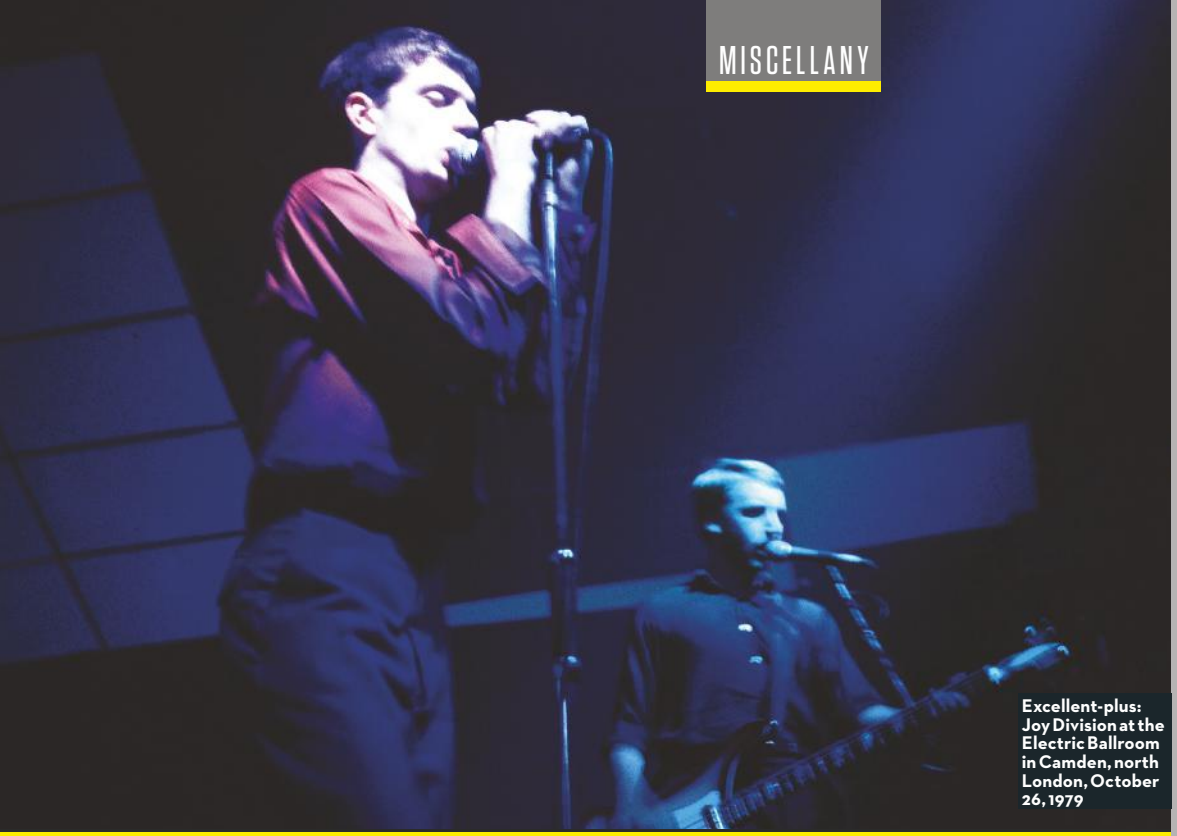
LOT 277
The Return Of The Durutti Column LP. Yes, it's the one with the sandpaper cover. Up for £200, it went for £1,100 – a record for that album. Careful where you stack it, mind...

LOT 83
Joy Division flightcase. A lot of Joy Division's gear was stolen from a van when New Order first visited New York in 1980. In the catalogue, Hooky recounts going with Rob Gretton to an "Aladdin's cave" of stolen goods in Brooklyn to identify and retrieve this part of it. A worthwhile trip: it sold for £23,000.

LOT 253
Factory Records hanging table. A famous punchline (literally) in Factory history. In the *24 Hour Party People* film, Paddy Considine's Rob Gretton punches Steve Coogan (Tony Wilson) when Wilson tells him he has spent £30,000 of New Order money on this fancy surface. "Given to me by Tony [*Wilson*] when Factory went bust," says Hooky in the catalogue, but he disputes its cost price. "Maybe the accounts said it cost £30,000," Hooky writes, "but the artist who built it told me he got paid £3,000..." Ultimately sold at auction for £9,000.

LORNE THOMSON/GETTY IMAGES

LOTS 145-157
Martin Hannett rehearsal tapes. These were studio tapes containing Martin Hannett's private preferred mixes of Joy Division songs, his studio ambiences (cup smashing, lift noises and the like) and studio "rehearsals" – warm-ups for studio takes. Estimated at £1,000 apiece, they were all withdrawn from the sale. Perhaps they will resurface somewhere soon...
JOHN ROBINSON
www.omegaauctions.co.uk



Excellent-plus: Joy Division at the Electric Ballroom in Camden, north London, October 26, 1979

CHRIS MILLS/GETTY IMAGES

KNOWN PLEASURES!

A brief guide to Joy Division and New Order collectables. *By Mark Bentley*

FACTORY RECORDS is one of the most storied record labels here has ever been, which spells money to a collector. Its unparalleled roster of acts – headed by Joy Division and New Order – and its sod-the-expense management and creative team (Tony Wilson, Martin Hannett, Peter Saville) delivered a discography less like a list of old records, and more like a catalogue of precious art exhibits.

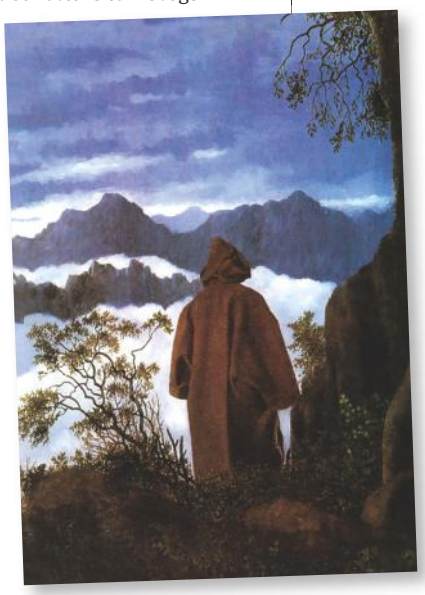
The earliest release – FAC 1 – is not vinyl at all, but a Saville-designed, typo-heavy poster for The Russel (sic) Club gigs in May and June '79. An authenticated original sold for £9,000 in March 2019. FAC 2 is the label sampler, a beautifully executed 2 x 7in EP anthology of Factory's acts, including Cabaret Voltaire, Durutti Column and John Dowie. Originals of those will set you back £140+.

The point we're making is that Factory releases are highly prized. Its first LP release, FAC 10 – *Unknown Pleasures* – is such an item. Collector site Discogs notes that by mid-1980, only 20,000 copies had ever been pressed. That means prices are only going one way. You're looking for that achingly fragile textured sleeve, and the mastering legend "THIS IS THE WAY/A PORKY PRIME CUT" in the run-off groove. Prices start at £70 for 'Good' copies and only go up. £130 seems the going rate for an 'Excellent' version.

Joy Division records display Beatles-level variations in pressing details. FAC 25 – *Closer* – comes in different sleeve iterations, some with rough inner sleeves and rounded corners. Some issues glow translucent red when held up to the light; Martin Hannett apparently demanded a second cut after 5,000 copies were pressed from the 'wrong' master. Either way, you're looking at £100-plus for the very best copies; remarkable for an '80s album that made No 6 in the charts.

Interestingly, the two most grail-like Joy Division items weren't issued by Factory at all. First up, the "Licht Und Blindheit" set on the French Sordide Sentimental label from March 1980. Featuring the first appearance of "Atmosphere", this French-only issue came in a limited edition of 1,578 copies with a three-page, colour booklet. $1,500 to you. The other infamous grail is the earliest-ever release, the Nazi-referencing "Ideal For Living" EP, limited to 1,000 copies and released on the band's own Enigma label. Heavily counterfeited, this is *the* premium Joy Division item to own. One bona fide original made £4,480 in September 2019.

New Order stuff won't quite reach these heights. You're looking at £30 or so for minty vinyl issues of *Power, Corruption & Lies* and *Movement*. Interestingly, New Order's most valuable standard-issue album is *Republic*. Pressed in low numbers – as was the way in the CD-loving '90s – the vinyl version can make £100. Mostly, New Order's value lies in the singles. Everyone needs the original Blue Monday 12in (FAC 73) in their life – £25 seems fair. The hardcore seek the oddities, like the red-vinyl New Zealand version of "Blue Monday" ($1,000) or the Japan-only promo of the same, with custom, different sleeve art and a shorter 4:09 mix. There are only 25 in the world, which is why that will cost you £500.



ART OF DARKNESS

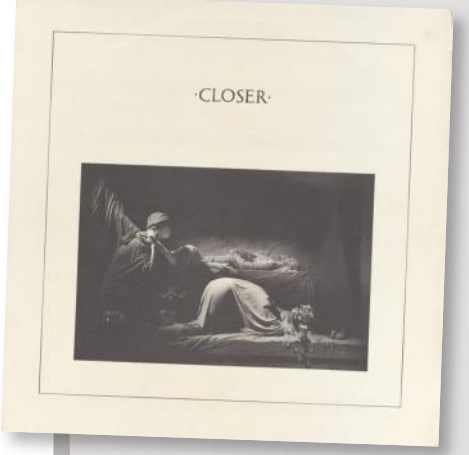
The sad story of the *Closer* sleeve. "The whole event is unsettling," says Peter Saville

THE cover artwork to *Closer*, a striking photo of an ornate Italian tomb taken by Bernard Pierre Wolff, became both prophetic and controversial after Ian Curtis died. In fairness, Factory Records art director Peter Saville had not heard a single note or lyric from the album when Joy Division called at his west London studio during the album sessions. He was simply fascinated at the time by Wolff's photographs, initially suspecting they were not even real graves, but a kind of postmodern art statement.

All four band members mulled over the photos before choosing the Appiani family tomb in Genoa's Cimitero Monumentale di Staglieno. "With hindsight, the whole event is unsettling," says Saville. "For no reason, I showed them photos of tombs that actually turned out to be real tombs in Italy. Ian obviously knew the mood, the timbre of what he was writing, and felt this was appropriate."

Saville and co-designer Martyn Atkins intended *Closer* to have an "archival" character: austere, classical and coldly beautiful. By the time Curtis committed suicide, two months later, the sleeve was already printed. "A lot of journalists said we were cashing in," recalls Bernard Sumner. "They thought we'd picked the image because of what happened to Ian, but that was wrong. All of us went to that meeting at Peter Saville's, way before we knew there was any trouble with Ian. After Ian died we all thought, 'Oh my god, what do you do about the sleeve?' But we decided that because Ian was there to help pick it, we couldn't change it." According to Saville, the band agreed with Tony Wilson and Rob Gretton that "it was almost more wrong to change it".

STEPHEN DALTON



GLASS/ DIGITAL

7 Joy Division/ New Order video collections

JOY DIVISION HERE ARE THE YOUNG MEN

1982

Only ever released on VHS, this grainy, none-more-black hour shot at three gigs – the Manchester Apollo on October 28 and 29, 1979, and at Effenaar in Eindhoven, Netherlands, on January 18, 1980 – is best found on YouTube today. A rare study in visceral post-punk bleakness and freaky dancing that contributes significantly to the widespread belief that the 1970s were one big power cut.
Available: YouTube, VHS

NEW ORDER PUMPED FULL OF DRUGS

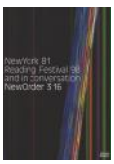
1986

A surly New Order react badly to a security-subdued audience in Shinjuku, Japan, in 1985 – Sumner abuses lighting crew, kicks out at equipment and demands that the crowd clap louder. The Tony Wilson-directed live footage captures NO in the midst of their creative breakthrough, however, focusing largely on *Low-Life* and previewing "As It Is When It Was" from *Brotherhood*.
Available: YouTube, VHS

NEW ORDER STORY

1993

As the first major hiatus loomed, Paul Morley penned a documentary on the band to slot between 21 videos stretching back to "Transmission". Bono, and Neil Tennant feature amongst the talking heads, often filmed in bizarre circumstances: Sumner was interviewed mid-haircut and the band took part in a mock TV quiz show hosted by Keith Allen.
Available: DVD



NEW ORDER 316

2001

Combining the 1981 NYC live film *Taras Shevchenko* with a truncated run through the 1998 Reading Festival set, *316* acted as a bookend for New Order's first era, with plenty of Joy Division thrown in and a guest appearance from Keith Allen. No prizes for guessing which half of the film he's in.
Available: DVD

NEW ORDER 511

2002

A satisfying mix of 11 exuberant New Order and five refined Joy Division tracks filmed at Finsbury Park in 2002. Features some prime Barney yelps and mighty examples of Hooky going at his bass like a welder at a gnarly girder.
Available: DVD

NEW ORDER A COLLECTION

2005

A video anthology compiling promo films from "Confusion" to "Waiting For The Siren's Call". There's good reason to stick with it past "Crystal" though; the bonus videos include their legendary appearance on *Top Of The Pops* performing "Regret" on a beach in LA surrounded by frolicking hardbodies, and a cameo from David Hasselhoff in *Baywatch* mode.
Available: DVD

NEW ORDER LIVE IN GLASGOW

2008

Besides an 18-track set shot at the O2 Academy Glasgow, padded in the middle section with songs from *Waiting For The Siren's Call* and rounded off with early NO/JD classics, *Live In Glasgow* came accompanied by a DVD of rare footage from throughout the '80s, including New Order's pivotal slot at Glastonbury 1981.
Available: DVD
MARK BEAUMONT

Mid-set, Barney contemplates the manufacturing costs of the "Blue Monday" 12in

LEON MORRIS/GETTY IMAGES

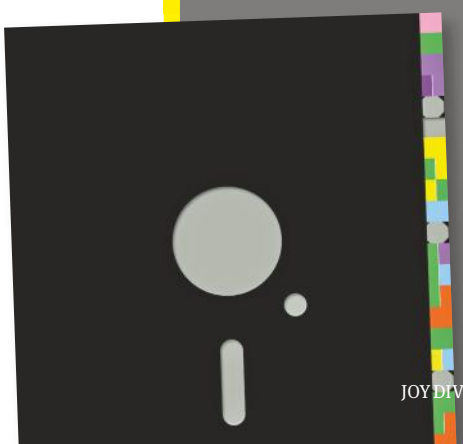
DISK ERROR

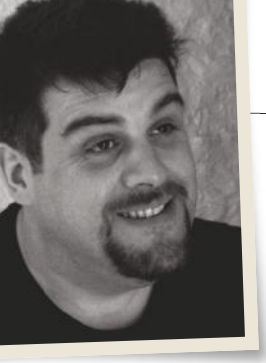
The story behind "Blue Monday"'s cash-haemorrhaging cover

WHEN Peter Hook was handed a sculpture Factory had commissioned to commemorate 500,000 sales of "Blue Monday" – the label wasn't part of the BPI so there wouldn't be any gold or platinum discs to hand around – he would comment, "This is the award for us losing £50,000, because we were making a loss of 10p on every sale."

So the legend goes. Designed by Peter Saville and Brett Wickens for a fee of £538.20 and sent to the printers without the approval of Factory or the band since the design was so late, the die-cut packaging with a silver inner sleeve, mimicking a 12in computer floppy disk, apparently cost 10p more to produce than Factory was selling the record for. The actual costs involved are open to question though. Tony Wilson himself claimed that Factory's "strange accounting system" was leaving him a mere 5p out of pocket for every single shifted. At the time nobody expected "Blue Monday" to become the best-selling 12in of all time, so felt they could swallow a loss of a few hundred quid, tops. But even at Wilson's conservative estimate, "Blue Monday"'s three million sales worldwide would still mean a hefty £150,000 hit in order to give the world the best ship-spotting dance classic in history.

In reality, Factory's loss would have been nowhere near this figure. Saville himself has claimed that nobody knows exactly how many of the expensive sleeves were produced, and the die-cut element and silver inner sleeve were quickly phased out in second and third pressings, creating a profitable product with the holes replaced by silver ink. Add in publishing payments from its relentless radio play and revenue from the song's use in adverts – the band are rumoured to have received $200,000 for allowing "Blue Monday" to be re-recorded for a Sunkist ad – and you can safely assume that "Blue Monday" is now firmly in the black.
MARK BEAUMONT





STOP ME

...IF YOU'VE HEARD THIS ONE BEFORE

STEPHEN DALTON encounters the lesser-spotted lighter side of the Joy Division/New Order legend. "My cock's as big as the M1..."

BERNARD Sumner arrives at the luxury Soho hotel suite looking pensive, clearly haunted by some unquiet memory. The ghosts of the distant past, still a heavy weight on his shoulders. "Is this the room where I pissed the bed?" the New Order singer muses, with just the faint flicker of a smile.

It soon becomes clear that Sumner is not even joking, cheerfully sharing graphic details about a boozy night at the Groucho club some years ago, which ended with an unfortunate self-soiling incident. "I've never done it anywhere else," the singer protests. "I thought, fucking hell, the maid's going to think I'm some kind of lowlife scumbag! And she'd be right."

In my meetings with New Order over the past 20 years, this naughty schoolboy act has become familiar as Sumner's default public persona. This is the former punk rocker, after all, who used to urinate though a hole in the floor of Joy Division's rehearsal room onto the drumkit of the rival band below. The man who, back in 1984, introduced New Order's "The Perfect Kiss" on stage under its alternative working title, "My Cock's As Big As The M1". The sporadic depressive who tried writing songs on Prozac in the early '90s, then later boasted about the super-hard "diamond cutter" erections it gave him.

New Order are living proof that history repeats itself, first as tragedy, then as farce, then as smutty comic banter. In their early days, immediately post Joy Division, the band earned a reputation for sullen arrogance and aloof mystique, a pose encouraged by manager Rob Gretton. In reality, this was a brilliant front that played well to a largely London-centric, mostly middle-class media, who bought into the band's potent Prole Art Threat image wholesale.

In reality, these post-punk veterans are amusing, self-deprecating, frequently puerile company, more like earthy northern music-hall entertainers than rock stars. That said, their deadpan Mancunian wit sometimes gets lost in translation. Media reverence towards Ian Curtis as a tortured poet-martyr is one of their favourite tasteless targets. "He was a stubborn fucker, let's be honest," Stephen Morris told me recently, shrugging off the singer's suicide. "He was a stubborn fucker and he was clumsy."

The other toucan: Barney at home in Manchester, April 25, 1995

But there is method behind New Order's cheerfully lowbrow humour, of course. Their career has been overshadowed by tragedy, suffering major financial and personal losses along the way. While we savour Sumner's filthy, funny stories about the messy aftermath of ingesting potentially lethal quantities of booze and drugs, it is easy to forget that he began drinking heavily before shows as a way of combating ferocious stage fright after being thrust into the frontman spotlight just weeks after Curtis took his own life.

Nowadays, Sumner tells me, he typically limits himself to two glasses of wine a night. "Well I stop counting after two glasses, anyway," he grins. "I've learnt to pace myself because as you get older the hangovers get worse and worse. Even when I was 17 or 18 I used to get terrible hangovers. Alcohol doesn't agree with me, believe it or not. What I'm trying to say is I've learnt my lesson. I can't do Party Central these days. You've got to remember my life has been Party Central since I was 21, in Joy Division."

> "IS THIS THE ROOM WHERE I PISSED THE BED?" SUMNER MUSES, WITH JUST A FAINT FLICKER OF A SMILE

A psychiatrist might argue that New Order's blunt gallows humour is a way of dealing with decades of guilt and grief. The untimely deaths of Curtis, producer Martin Hannett, manager Rob Gretton and Factory boss Tony Wilson, compounded by recent health scares and legal battles, have left their scars. But Sumner disputes this analysis, arguing he was shaped more by his tough childhood than adult struggles.

"Personal tragedies, people got ill and died; that's not all in the public domain, but there was all that stuff going on," he nods. "It's just inevitable, that shit happens in everybody's lives. You just have to deal with it. I had it all when I was young, between the ages of 12 and 21. I just learned how to accept it, because there is nothing else you can do."

Sumner finally went public with his traumatic past in his 2014 memoir *Chapter & Verse*, which detailed his upbringing in working-class Salford as the only child of a mother with cerebral palsy who would bully and beat him. Remarkably, he seems to bear no bitterness.

"It didn't make me angry and bitter, but it made me a little hard-hearted," he says. "I was a soft kid, you know? Salford people would say it toughens you up, but it's very unpleasant, because I didn't really want to be toughened up. But that's the only way you can handle it, otherwise you are going to have a breakdown."

Behind their smutty jokes and sarcastic humour, New Order come across in person as human, vulnerable, unguarded, even slightly damaged. Sumner may enjoy playing the mischievous schoolboy, perpetually keen to provoke a reaction, but he also seems quite a sensitive soul at heart. Even after decades of regular press adulation, for example, he still studiously avoids reading reviews of his work.

"I never read reviews," Sumner quietly confesses at the end of our meeting, in a rare moment of taking himself seriously. "Because if I believed the bad stuff people have written about me, there would be no New Order. We would have given up years ago."

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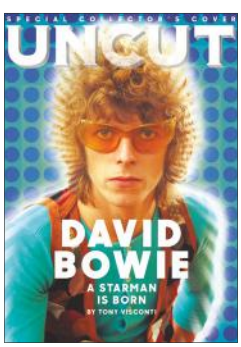
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